

**CITATION OF NOMINATION FOR A 2023 BRITISH CHESS EDUCATIONAL TRUST
AWARD**

3Cs Chess Club

The 3Cs chess club in Oldham is this year celebrating its 45th anniversary, having begun life when two local chess-playing teachers had their young children refused entry to a chess club because of their age and therefore decided to form their own organisation dedicated to teaching the game to those of primary school age.

They named the club “Children’s Chess Club of Oldham” (still its official title) but which has since become more commonly known, both national and internationally, as 3Cs.

Several of those original young players naturally progressed beyond school age and the club therefore itself expanded to accommodate those of later years. However, while 3Cs has since had considerable success, both as a club (the only two-time winners of the ECF Club of the Year award) and through its individual members (39 Internationals, 22 British Champions and a Grandmaster), the main ethos of the club will always be to encourage children to play chess, irrespective of age or ability.

To that end – and while many chess clubs wait for people to come to them to increase their numbers - 3Cs’ members take it upon themselves to promote chess to youngsters by going into local schools to provide coaching and then encourage those who wish to do so to visit the club’s own weekly coaching sessions where not only can their skills be honed but where they are able meet other youngsters who have the same interest.

As part of this process, 3Cs also organise regular junior congresses for those who attend the schools’ coaching sessions – the most recent of which, in January this year, attracted 51 entrants aged between 6 and 15, of whom many have since become regulars at 3Cs’ club nights.

The young players are then assessed so they can be taught at an appropriate level and then progress upwards as their skill level increases. The advice and training given to the young players is also of a high level and provided by several people with quality expertise of chess coaching, including Phil Adams, one of the longest-

serving, well-respected and successful ECF accredited coaches, Crystal Ashton, one of the leading female coaches in the country, and Dale James who won the 2022 ECF “Contribution to Junior Chess” award by visiting up to 10 local schools every week to put young players on their initial step up the chess ladder and was 3Cs’ first ever British Champion when winning the under-14s’ title in 1984.

Such quality coaching is then helpful in reverse fashion as the young players at the club are then able to use their skills when returning to play in their school teams – the result of which can be seen by the fact that the Oldham Schools’ Chess Association have enough skilful players to compete as themselves in both the under-9s’ and under-11s’ EPSCA competitions against County-based opposition.

3Cs also believe that playing against more experienced opponents helps youngsters improve their own technique and so choose many of their young players for teams in Manchester League – where they can face adult opposition while not being concerned of the result (that’s the club’s view, even if the players are !) The level of success achieved via this venture is surely reflected by the fact that, despite 3Cs having joined the Manchester League in 1980, they are the most decorated club in its 134 year history, having already won 86 trophies, while their nearest rivals – who have been in the League since its inception - are 24 adrift.

The honours boards at 3Cs’ headquarters also give a clear indication of the club’s success with junior players over many years. How many other clubs can match 3Cs’ record of 39 junior internationals and 19 national junior champions, all of whom being products of the club’s own junior coaching system ?

Those numbers also provide an insight into the diversity of the 3Cs’ junior section in that 18 of the above were female club members while, apart from the four countries of the British Isles, youngsters currently attending the club are from the following countries – Albania, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sri Lanka and Ukraine.

Furthermore, while internationals and champions are at the pinnacle of the 3Cs’ junior pyramid, the club gives just as much attention to those at its base. Whatever the standard of a young player’s ability, 3Cs’ first aim is just wanting them to enjoy playing the game – any subsequent success is purely a bonus.

Junior coaching at 3Cs is also not just limited to over-the-board activities. Photographs of every World Champion adorn the walls of the 3Cs’ club and are used to help teach youngsters about the history of the game while any young player can borrow a book, free of charge, from the club’s extensive library in order to study any particular aspect of the game in which they are interested.

A usual 3Cs' club night often involves the junior players being given some themed chess puzzles to solve before having a coaching session and finishing with a series of games.

The combination of young children from a working-class town in the north of England and the game of chess might not seem plausible to most outsiders, yet thanks to 45 years of effort by many dedicated people at 3Cs that partnership has seen generations of junior players become involved with the game

So, yes, while the name of 3Cs might be well-known within the chess world for its success over many years, the club will always consider any plaudits to be a by-product of its real objective in promoting chess to those of a younger age.

While some clubs might believe success is based on the number of trophies won or the level to which players progress up the ratings, 3Cs judge their own achievements solely by the number of youngsters who attend the club each week. Trophies can be won by a club one year and lost the next; young players can remain for ever.

However, it is therefore maybe not surprising that many 3Cs' young players have gone on to achieve honours in their later years ... with one particular aspect showing the result of the coaching they had received at the club from a very young age. 3Cs have been regular participants in the 4NCL – and twice qualified for the European Club Cup – with teams mostly comprised of “true” 3Cs' players rather than the other manufactured sides they face and is therefore a real testament to the 3Cs' junior policy.

Therefore, the receiving of an English Chess Educational Trust award for 3Cs in 2023 would be a fitting way to honour the club's dedication to junior chess,, especially in this, the 45th year since some children were refused access to a chess club and two local teachers therefore decided to prove that nobody is too young to play the game.

For more information of junior involvement at the 3Cs chess club please click the following link to the club website ... <https://www.3cschessclub.com/>

3Cs Chess Club, Oldham

North Liverpool Academy

Dear John,

I am very sorry to bother you and I hope this email finds you well!

Please could I nominate North Liverpool Academy for a BCET award? North Liverpool Academy is a large state funded secondary school in Liverpool who, in the past 2 years, has shown an outstanding contribution to junior and scholastic chess in Merseyside. The school's Headteacher, Emily Vernon has facilitated chess provision for not just her own students, but hundreds of primary and secondary school children across the city and a lot of the secondary school activity in the city recently has only been possible because of their generous support.

Emily, along with members of her amazing Mathematics Department initially began their school's chess club due to a member of their student body being a talented competitive chess player. He worked closely with SLT to develop the club and it quickly became a popular and active part of school life. Emily wanted to create opportunities for her students to play chess outside of the club though, and reached out to me to offer her school as a venue for any local tournament which might be happening, completely free of charge. Secondary school chess is something which I had been looking to further in Merseyside, but - as always - budget constraints had prevented any real progress. The offer of a large, well equipped venue in a very accessible part of the city was too good for us to pass up! Emily's offer gave almost 100 secondary school students the chance to come together for the very first time to play chess. Students enjoyed 4 rounds of chess, a simul with IM Gary Quillan, and loads of snacks provided by the school's catering team! The feedback was incredible and we have been able to sustain really great relationships with most of the schools who participated in that initial event. After the event North Liverpool Academy said that they wanted to become a city-wide "hub" for secondary chess across the city - something which we sorely need - and made a large investment in equipment, development, and promotional materials to ensure that they became just that. Without North Liverpool Academy's promotion of chess, we wouldn't have been able to create what is now a large secondary school chess network and I am absolutely delighted to say that Emily and her Maths team made the same offer this year. We will be holding our second event for 120 students this coming Thursday (I am happy to share pictures from the event to support their nomination if you would like?) and North Liverpool Academy's chess development over the past year is such that they are strong contenders for a podium finish at the event. The school set out to promote chess as an enrichment opportunity, to help students develop key skills which will be useful in later life, but they have been so successful that they have managed to cultivate a frighteningly good competitive team! North Liverpool Academy took home the silver medal in July 2022's Chess in Schools and Communities annual St George's Hall tournament, being pipped to the post by the tiniest of margins by Calday Grange, who have been national champions in the past and have a very long standing and well established chess programme. NLA's second place finish in only their second competitive tournament is a testament to the support, encouragement and passion which the school staff have shown for chess. When I last spoke to Emily she indicated that chess was so popular now that they have to run two clubs, one for beginners to come and learn the game, and one focussed on competitive development for the higher rated players.

North Liverpool Academy have also used chess as a way to reach out to children in the local community. In August, their summer school held chess lessons as a way to help ease the transition from primary to secondary school for members of their new Year 7 cohort. We

have also had preliminary discussions about working with North Liverpool Academy to provide a chess summer school as part of the government's HAF programme, giving children from across the city access to high quality and fun summer holiday programmes! I was also invited to spectate in a tournament which they ran for a number of their primary feeder schools. I was lucky enough to chat to members of staff from the primary schools who expressed nothing but delight at the opportunity to bring their students to a chess event. The event was supported by students from NLA who were allowed off timetable for an afternoon to help coach, support, and encourage all those young chess enthusiasts from the visiting primary schools. I was in awe at the level of commitment to chess from the students, and was so happy when I also heard from members of staff that the students have developed so quickly that they're now beating the Maths Department! The NLA students were so eager to talk to me about chess and for me to see what they had learned that I was left in no doubt that the school is a real success story for scholastic chess.

In summary, I believe that North Liverpool Academy are very deserving of a BCET award for the following reasons;

- Because of their commitment to their own students - developing a formidable competitive team as well as a welcoming, fun and supportive scholastic club.
- Because of their commitment to promoting scholastic chess across Merseyside through proactively working with members of the local chess community to run city wide tournaments
- Because of their innovative use of chess as a fun and educational way to support children within the local area
- Because of how they have tied chess to supporting student development which will extend to scenarios beyond over the board!

If there is anything further I can add to this please do let me know. I would be delighted to share photos from the event on Thursday to support this nomination but also just to show BCET how popular secondary school chess is becoming on Merseyside!

Thank you for your time whilst reading this nomination and I look forward to hearing from you, I've got my fingers crossed that I've done NLA justice in my email!

Many thanks,
Jenny Long -
Liverpool Junior Chess Club Volunteer

Bishop Douglas School

I would like to nominate Bishop Douglass School for a BCET award. Bishop Douglass is a non-selective secondary school in Barnet. I have been involved with the chess club since September 2021, alongside Gavin Carter who previously ran the club himself. Activities provided by the club include:

- A weekly chess club on Friday evenings. The club consistently attracts up to 30 students a week, to the extent that we are having to consider buying extra sets to keep up with demand.
- A lichess club with 50 members. The online club provided a way to keep the club going during the pandemic, and has continued to host arenas at lunchtimes and during holidays.
- Entry into the NSCC U19 Championships. We took 10 pupils to the Central London qualifier this year. (A report from the event written by our students for the school newsletter is included below)
- We also entered a team in a NSCC Repechage event, where we finished 3rd and narrowly missed out on qualification for the next round.
- Two teams entered into the Team Chess Challenge. Competing against a number of prestigious private schools, our A Team scored a creditable 8/16 match points. Our B Team also achieved an excellent 3-1 victory over Harrow School C.
- The club caters to a wide range of abilities and we aim to be as inclusive as possible. Some of our students have begun to play in individual tournaments such as the LJCC or for local clubs. Other students who regularly attend are on the school's SEN register, including some students who attend tournaments with the school teams. The students are the heart of the club, and are always willing to play in good spirit and create a communal atmosphere by helping and coaching each other.
- Plans for the future are to continue to enter these annual tournaments, as well as the Junior Team Chess Challenge. We are also hoping to be involved in the organisation of a tournament for other local state schools in the summer term.

The range of opportunities provided by the school, particularly as a non-selective state school, are superb. The flourishing state of the club reflects the work that has been put in by Gavin in particular over a number of years.

If you would like any more information about the club please do not hesitate to ask,

Best wishes
 Harry Croasdale
Teacher of Mathematics
Bishop Douglass School

Chess Championships



In November, we took a team to Westminster School to compete in the first round of the National Schools Championships. Some excellent chess was played in a picturesque playing hall, and some of our students got to test their skills against England internationals. Stefano (Y7), Elijah (Y10), and Rocco (Y10) each achieved some fantastic results, but the standout performer was Marcin (Y11) who won all of his games.

Here is a report of the day, written by Stefano and Masashi in Year 7.

'Hello, this is Masashi and Stefano from 7AS. Firstly, we want to say a huge thank you for this opportunity to participate in this event.

My game (Stefano) started as the opponent checking my King, and then taking my rook. In the middle, we traded most pieces, the opponent still having the advantage of a rook. At the endgame, he had a rook and I only had pawns, he forced me by promoting his pawn to a Queen, therefore I knew I needed to rest (I could not take any more of it) and then I resigned. It was a complete challenge, considering that he took my rook and I was under pressure.

My game (Masashi) started with French defense. My opponent's attack was strong; I could only stop it with trading my queen. The middle game was the part of the game which I regret the most. I should have used more time on calculating. In the end game I had trade all my minor pieces in order to protect my pawns, which only left the knight my opponent had. This made the game quite easy. He simply took all my pawns and he promoted his pawn into a queen and finally into a checkmate.

At the end, some of us went home from the school, some took the minibus. We went home, a bit down that we did not qualify for the next round but incredibly grateful. We especially say thank you to Mr. Croasdale and Mr. Carter for organizing this trip. We hope to have another opportunity to play in the near future.'

Hi John,

I hope you're well. Additional chess activities at Bishop Douglass in the past few months have included:

- Entry into, and a third place finish at, the SCCU Junior Jamboree U18 minor. For many of our pupils this was their first experience in a classical chess tournament.
- As well as our usual chess club on Fridays, we have partnered with Chess in Schools and Communities and are launching Thursday training sessions for students who want to learn chess. We have linked with the school's Duke of Edinburgh Award group, and have a number of students learning the game as part of the scheme.
- We've held screenings of the World Chess Championship at lunchtimes which have proven popular (I can send photos when they're approved for release).

For some photos of the chess club recently and from the Junior Jamboree, see: <https://twitter.com/BishopDouglass/status/1648986150172868608>

Best wishes,

Harry Croasdale

Ampleforth College

Dear Mr Wickham,

I would like to nominate **Ampleforth College** for the BCET Awards 2023 for demonstrating their outstanding achievements and enthusiasm in chess.

In December, as an alumnus, I returned to the school to deliver a chess masterclass on a Saturday morning. There were over a dozen in attendance, and I was told it would have been double that if not for a sudden schedule change. After the masterclass, most of the juniors stayed on into their lunch break, and we played an online match against a junior team in China who were in lockdown:

[*Friendly match 3rd December :\) * - Chess.com](#)

It was fantastic to see for myself how dedicated the staff, led by Piers Butler and former England Youth International Jon Mutton (who is also Deputy Head Pastoral) are in engaging children in chess. They also have an extremely talented player called Gaspard:

<https://www.chess.com/member/mrgdm>

In the World Chess League.Live, he managed to twice beat the Harvard University Captain, James Toliver, to secure a famous draw for Ampleforth College:

<https://www.chess.com/club/matches/live/ampleforth-college/1529122>

That match was featured on Twitch streaming for commentary, which was watched across the school, see: <https://tinyurl.com/Ampleforth-vs-Harvard>.



The team currently (as of 8th February 2023) sit joint 5th in the World Chess League.Live:

<https://results.scorchapp.co.uk/t/worldchessleaguelive2023/standings/6>

They have defeated Concho Chess Academy from Texas, Anglia Ruskin University (UK), Chess Heroes (SA), and had two very credible draws against Port Elizabeth Chess Club and Harvard University.

This demonstrates substantial improvement across the junior club, as they have already secured more points at just over the halfway stage this season (4), than they did for the entire of last season (3.5): <https://results.scorchapp.co.uk/t/worldchessleaguelive2021-2022/standings/10>

The World Chess League.Live is played on Sunday evenings, and Piers Butler organises the teams even though its on his day off. The students have their regular sessions on Wednesday evenings, and on top of that they have junior and senior house chess competitions and matches against other schools:

<https://tinyurl.com/Ampleforth-vs-Yarm>

<https://tinyurl.com/House-Chess>

They also compete in the *Ivan Gromov League* which you can see details of here:

<https://ecflms.org.uk/lms/node/69978/tables>

Freddy Trounce is the finest individual example of a player improving. Just under 3 years ago he was rated 689, and his rating is now more than double that, and in November he reached 1543.

Ampleforth College have also successfully used chess to integrate students and visitors to their school. You can read an example of this here: <https://tinyurl.com/Chess-letter>, as well as how it is regularly played in student's free time on their own volition/initiative: tinyurl.com/Chess-free-time.

I am also impressed by how even after students leave the school that they continue to engage with the online chess club. The club plays regular matches on Chess.com, you can see them here:

<https://www.chess.com/clubs/matches/live/ampleforth-college/completed>.

For example this match: <https://www.chess.com/club/matches/live/ampleforth-college/1750719> comprised of two students who moved on from Ampleforth to another school in their sixth form,

and it also featured one of the student's parents who got involved as well. This shows the lasting legacy Ampleforth has had on their students who play chess.

Therefore, based on the above, and I am sure there are more things that I missed, I highly recommend and nominate **Ampleforth College** for the BCET Awards 2023. If you have any questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Peter Hornsby

Nomination for Ampleforth College for BCET Awards 2023

Club nights

2 years ago Ampleforth Chess comprised of 12 players from the junior school. We ran an online interhouse chess league to get senior school players involved. It worked well but we needed to do more.

Last year the club grew in number but still mainly among the juniors, it seemed the seniors were not up for the noise! So we started an online chess ladder to get players motivated and keen to improve.

This year we laid on 2 club nights, one for juniors and one for seniors, each with their own chess ladder. With regular promotion using posters, emails, and matches, the junior club remained strong whilst the senior club started to grow, hitting our capacity of 24 players.

We are now also running internal competitions for each of the houses on chess.com: weekly blitz games where students are randomly paired up and play a quick 5|2 match. Its purposefully designed to be short and sweet to appeal to as many students as possible. Eventually this will produce a list of each house's top players ready for an inter house competition in the last term.

As a result of all this work, we now have 147 names on our list, comprising of 13 juniors, 44 intermediates (yr 9-11), and 32 seniors (6th form) with another 8 staff, 47 Old Amplefordians (OAs) and now 2 parents, a lot of whom are now playing for our OA team who are currently doing very well indeed in the World Chess League on chess.com.

How we are developing chess further

When they are not playing in the league, our OA team headed up by the amazing Peter Hornsby organise friendlies most Sunday evenings. So far 18 of the students have competed in these matches, a chess masterclass that we laid on and / or a OTB match against Leeds Grammar School.

We have a school chess tie that a number of students are striving to earn this year. We plan to award these to those who have shown commitment to chess throughout the year.

We are also fortunate enough to have a Deputy Head who was in his time a National Junior player and who visits us most Mondays to help with coaching. Every week we have usually 3 members of staff giving advice and playing the students who are clearly enjoying and benefitting from this.

The future of chess in Ampleforth

The reputation of chess throughout the school has grown considerably. The number of students now signed up to chess.com and playing each other during their free time has grown rapidly.

The house tournaments are harnessing more and more interest and we look forward to a busy inter house tournament next term. Next year we will then harness this interest in more matched both online and OTB.

How chess supports educational development

In their own words, students talk about how chess gets them away from playing mindless games on their phones. In many cases its giving them an activity that they actually want to do, helping them meet people from other houses and other year groups.

They enjoy how we use the club ladder to group them into pods on club nights, how it increases their problem-solving skills and how some of them are keen to use this to enhance their UCAS personal statement.

We even find some of them had no reason to use the library prior to playing chess and so now do use it. It also enriches the connection between students and teachers, the librarian and of course others across year groups.

Westminster Under School

Good afternoon,

I would like to nominate Westminster Under School, 27 Vincent Square, Westminster, SW1P 2NB, for the BCET Awards 2023.

Chess is a very active part of the school community, and Westminster Under has recently achieved outstanding results. In 2022, they won the EPSCA's National Primary School Chess Championships for both the Under 9 and the Under 11 sections. This year they are also participating in the ECF Under 19 championships despite being a junior school, where they hope to reach the finals.

Currently, a very high proportion of boys attend chess clubs after school, run by James Coleman, GM Julian Hodgson and IM Lorin D'Costa. There is also a annual house chess competition within the school which encourages every single boy to take part in.

For avoidance of doubt, I am associated with the school as a parent of two boys at the school. I believe an award will inspire the boys further in chess, where they continue developing the boys at the school and their continued excellence.

Best regards,

John Zhao

Good morning,

Futher to my email regarding the nomination for BCET Awards, Westminster Under School has just qualified for the ECF U19 National School finals for the first time ever. In fact it

might be the first time a junior school has qualified for this, though some fact checking is required for this. Nonetheless, it is an incredible achievement and adds value for WUS to be considered for an award.

You should have already heard from Westminster Under School that they do intend to apply for the award.

Best regards,

John Zhao

CITATION from Dr Glenn Horridge, Head of Chess, Westminster Under School, Adrian House, 27 Vincent Square, London. SW1P 2NN

Westminster Under School is a boys' prep school in the heart of London and has 285 Year 3 to 8 pupils. Entry is at Year 3, 4 or 7. A chess booklet is sent to all parents at the start of the academic year "to demystify some of the complexities of the prep school chess world and set out our procedures and expectations".

In the Autumn term every boy in the school plays in the Inter House Chess Competition. Younger boys or those with no prior experience are coached by more experienced players before their match. Results are updated daily on a prominent display board and eagerly watched (picture 1). A cup is awarded to the winning house and an engraved trophy given to each boy who wins his individual Year group.

We annually host an EPSCA National Primary Schools' Zonal Round in our school hall (this year's was on Sunday 27th February – pictures 2 and 3). We often enter up to four teams (two U11 and two U9) and have in the past won the U11 and U9 EPSCA's National Primary School Chess Championships - most recently 2022 for both!

We also play in the U19 ECF championship and this year, despite the young age of the players (one is in Year 5), we have reached the National Finals – a first for any prep school.

Mr James Coleman, GM Julian Hodgson and IM Lorin D'Costa run extremely well attended chess clubs during the week after school. Messrs Coleman and Hodgson on a Tuesday for Year 3 and 4, and then separately for Year 5 upwards. We also have the option of an extra Wednesday class depending on demand. Mr D'Costa runs our Elite Coaching. These latter sessions, which take place on a Friday between 4.15 and 6.00, are not intended as an extension to Tuesday Chess Club, but as competition preparation for the most experienced players. Entry is by invitation only, at my discretion.

Over the years we have had a number of boys playing at national and international level and the school is very keen to support them, allowing time off when appropriate. We also publish, in our weekly newsletter, not only stories of pupil Chess Achievements in school chess events but also successes outside school.

It is a delight to have had visits and talks by Grand Masters and pre-Covid Garry Kasparov visited the school twice, playing up to thirty boys at once in thirty simultaneous games. Vladimir Kramnik also visited to talk with parents and boys about his work in Artificial Intelligence and Chess.

It is an honour and encouragement to be nominated and considered for this prestigious Award.

Picture 1 – Central Chess Board for Autumn Competition:



Pictures 2 and 3 – EPSCA Zonal at WUS, Sunday 26th February 2023.





Lenzie Chess Academy nomination

Chess Scotland is pleased to nominate Lenzie Academy for a BCET Award.

Lenzie Chess Academy was founded in 2010 with 13 members.

Presently the Club Night is full to capacity with 26 members. Additionally, the club has been running online classes, catering for an extra 58 kids. In total more than 300 young people have learned to play the game of chess at Lenzie.

Lenzie Chess Academy is a club for junior players only (aged 7-16 years) Post Covid19 the club has moved premises from Lenzie to Glasgow City Centre, but has kept the name Lenzie.

The Club has regularly entered teams into the Scottish National Chess League, winning Division 5 in 2018. It currently has teams in divisions 2, 3 and 4. It also has teams in the Glasgow (evening) League.

Lenzie teams also played J4NCL online with Basilisks finishing season 6 as Division 1 Champions and Dementors winning the Season 6 Division 3 title.

Over the years its players have enjoyed great success in national and international tournaments.

It has the current British under 8 and UK Chess Challenge under 8 Champion – Supratit Banerjee. Supratit started at the club in November 2019 as a 5-year-old, barely knowing how the pieces moved. He is now a formidable international, currently ranked at No3 Standard Play and at No2 Rapidplay on FIDE's ranking for 9 years and under.

Paul

Dr Paul Richardson
St Mary's Catholic School
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Citation for the British Chess Educational Trust: St Mary's Catholic School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

St Mary's Catholic School is a state secondary school in Newcastle-upon-Tyne with approximately 1,400 students on roll, drawn from a wide range of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, at least one hundred of whom regularly play chess for fun and/or competitively.

Chess was introduced to the school from scratch in June 2012 and started with a single chess set and two Year 13 players. However, it very quickly established itself as one of the school's most popular extra-curricular activities. Within a few months, lunchtime tournaments were held as qualifying events for the UK Chess Challenge and these internal competitions continue to attract as many as eighty boys and girls across the full age range (11–18).

St Mary's first took part in the National Schools Chess Championships in October 2018. Before the first COVID-19 lockdown, the school's 'A' team reached two successive regional finals and only lost to very strong teams from their nearest rivals, RGS Newcastle. However, in March 2022, St Mary's beat the RGS for the first time and consequently represented the North East that June in the national finals at Stratford-Upon-Avon.

This summer, St Mary's is looking forward to a more successful campaign after qualifying a second time for the national finals of the NSCC. To develop a stronger squad, a standard play tournament of five rounds – the matches are all recorded on the ECF's LMS and the results are submitted for grading purposes – is currently being held. It involves sixteen students who are fighting for the final two places in the squad of eight that will compete in Nottingham on 29th and 30th June. This in-school event follows a separate nine-round rapid play tournament, the results of which were again submitted for rating purposes, that was held for St Mary's students across a full day during the Easter break.

In addition to the National Schools Chess Championships, St Mary's has also recently competed in the Team Chess Challenge and the Junior Team Chess Challenge. Last September, the school's strongest four players reached the national finals of the Team Chess Challenge at Imperial College London and achieved moderate success. This March, four younger players (all in Years 7 or 8) – of whom three had only started playing chess since joining St Mary's last September – qualified for and competed in the national finals of the Junior Team Chess Challenge. Many of St Mary's players have also recently gained further experience against strong competition by competing in the Ivan Gromov Online Chess League.

Since October 2018, St Mary's has run a weekly hour-long after-school Chess Club with the support of FIDE Master Tim Wall. He provides coaching to approximately twenty students during each Thursday meeting. Besides recruiting Tim, the school has invested heavily in equipment and learning resources. After starting out in 2012 with scant materials, St Mary's now has thirty-five tournament-standard chess sets, twenty digital DGT clocks, and an impressive library (in the region of 300 items) of books and DVDs that the students use and borrow. Nevertheless, with chess continuing to grow in popularity at St Mary's, more equipment and learning resources will soon be needed.

As important as the development of chess inside St Mary's has been, the school's most significant achievement is its ongoing promotion of chess to other schools – especially those in the state sector – across the region. Primarily through St Mary's efforts, there has recently been a major increase in the number of schools from the North East taking part in ECF-run events. In 2018, St Mary's struggled to find another school to compete against in the first round of the National Schools Chess Championships. Now, through direct contact and advertising, St Mary's has encouraged many other middle and high schools across Tyneside, County Durham and Northumberland to take part in national competitions.

To ensure that other schools have opportunities to compete, St Mary's has successfully hosted recent qualifying tournaments for the National Schools Chess Championships, Team Chess Challenge and Junior Team Chess Challenge. These events have involved as many as sixteen teams or nearly one hundred students from ten individual schools. Next year, it is expected that the events at St Mary's will attract more schools and students who have never previously taken part in regional or national competitions.

A final indicator of how much of a mark the school has made on chess in such a short time is its selection last August as the venue for the prestigious Northumbria Masters Chess Congress. This five-day event attracted two hundred players from across the UK and Europe, and was considered a huge success. It is feasible that St Mary's will host other major chess tournaments in the future and cement its position as an important centre for the game in the North East.

Warwick Junior School

BCET Junior School Chess Awards 2023

Dear BCET,

Chess at Warwick Junior School has flourished over recent years under the expert guidance of Paul Lam. Each week we have approximately 80 boys across all age groups (Year 3-Year 6) playing chess, with lunchtime clubs running from Monday to Friday. We run regular internal competitions held with prizes, demo-board displays, game analysis and puzzle-solving. With boys receiving End-of-year awards for overall achievement, conduct and progress. Below I have outlined some of the major achievements and initiatives that have been introduced through this academic year:

Internal Initiatives

- Introduction of the Master chess club for boys to receive additional high-level coaching.
- Lichess club and online tournaments set up during lockdown, with members regularly playing and practising on the site.
- Establishment of an annual Blitz chess tournament co-organised with Warwick Senior School. Warwick Junior School pupils have taken the majority of the top positions in the last two events, with Billy Fellowes winning the Weaving Cup (named for school alumnus FIDE Master Richard Weaving) twice.
- Establishing strong links between the school and Coventry Chess Academy, enabling pupils a pathway to chess out of school.
- Establishing links with local schools to play friendly Chess fixtures.

External School Success

- Participation in the Coventry Schools Chess League, with a projected second place finish in division 2 in the school's maiden season in the League, the only primary school competing in the whole event.
- Members represented a unified Warwick School team in the National Schools Chess Championship.
- 5th best school in the West Midlands for the 2021 UK Schools Chess Challenge (UKCC). Numerous members have played in the Megafinal and Gigafinal stages of the UKCC with Billy Fellowes making it as far as the Terafinal, the Grand Final of the competition.

Individual Success

- Numerous members have medalled in junior chess tournaments held as part of the Warwickshire Junior Chess Grand Prix.
- Members have gone on to play and win games in the local adult chess league, the Leamington & District Chess League.
- Billy Fellowes has represented England on numerous occasions, including the European Youth Championship, the European Youth Rapid & Blitz Chess Championship, the Glorney Cup and the World Cadets Rapid & Blitz Championship.
- Billy Fellowes and Ilyas Rashid were selected for the Warwickshire U11 squad which played in EPSCA and won every single game they played.
- Billy Fellowes scored his first draw in an over-the-board tournament game against an International Master, former Welsh number 1 John Cooper, and finished on 50% in the Coventry Chess Academy Master's Tournament in the process.
- Billy Fellowes played in the Menorca Chess Open which featured over 30 grandmasters and scored 4.5/9, despite being the 194th seed of 200 competitors. He was the joint-highest scoring England representative.
- Billy Fellowes became one of the youngest players to play in a top flight Leamington League match, on behalf of Kenilworth Chess Club.
- Billy Fellowes increased his national rating to nearly 2000, making him the number 2 for his age in the country.
- Billy Fellowes is also playing in the 2023 English Chess Championship at the age of just 11.
- Ilyas Rashid scored 4/5 in the Coventry Chess Academy Junior Rapidplay.

- Ilyas Rashid, Bo Choi, Lucas Wong, Monty Sweet, Joshua Wong, Sam Parsons and Hugh Swabey-Collinson all competed on behalf of Warwick Junior School in the Birmingham Megafinal of the UK Schools Chess Challenge. It marked the first time that Bo, Monty, Sam and Hugh had ever competed in a chess tournament outside of school. Ilyas scored 4/6 in the U10 section and qualified for the Gigafinal, the penultimate stage of the competition.

The success of both the internal program and individuals in a range of competitions has increased the popularity and status of chess within the Junior School. The boys are going from strength to strength and we look forward to challenging them further and developing the reputation of the school.

Charlton Junior Chess Club

SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHESS UNION FOUNDED 1892

Citation for the British Educational Trust – “Charlton Junior Chess Club” The Southern Counties Chess Union would like to nominate Charlton Junior Chess Club for the British Chess Educational Trust award.

Charlton Chess Club started a weekly junior chess club in 2018. From small beginnings, the club grew and now occupies its own room for just over one hour on Monday evenings, separate from the main chess club in a different room. Usually, 25-30 children attend each time, mostly of primary school age.

Each week the class starts with tuition on a large demonstration board and then the children play games of chess between themselves in an internal competition and solve chess puzzle sheets. The club enters two teams in the Junior 4NCL Online league, Charlton Tigers and Charlton Lions - the former has reached division one. Several children have progressed through the junior ranks into the main Charlton chess club and play for club teams in the Kent league.

Three youngsters have already achieved success at the national level:

1. Shreyas Royal was one of our earliest members and is now an International Master
2. Kushal Jakhria was one of the youngest ever to achieve a 1800 FIDE rating at age seven, he was highlighted in the Guardian newspaper
<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/mar/18/chess-rapport-closes-in-on-candidates-as-six-year-old-steals-show-at-blackpool>
3. Oleg Verbytski is the current British Under 10 champion

The latter two play regularly for Charlton teams in the Kent league.

The chief coach at the junior club is Anthony Stebbings, other tutors are David Morris (retired head teacher) and Jack Virgin (school teacher), assisted on the day by other club members.

The Charlton Chess Club website is <http://www.charltonchess.org.uk>.

Another noteworthy point to mention is that the club runs at Mycenae House, a venue which is not Council owned but independently run as a Community Association - the chess club supports it as a valuable community asset (Mycene House is 10% financed by Greenwich Council and the rest from community activities).

<https://mycenaehouse.co.uk/about/support-us/>.

A BCET award would be a fitting response to the efforts of the organisers of the Junior section to encourage chess, not just within Junior competitions but also at club and national levels. It is a fine example of what can be achieved for Junior chess when Club members, Junior players and Parents collaborate & encourage Junior players to excel