# BCET Awards 2016

**Sheringham Primary School Chess Club**

I would like to nominate Sheringham Primary School Chess Club, run by Matthew Perry,( a teacher at the school) for the BCET award 2016. As Norfolk Junior organiser for most years since 2000, I have become aware of the growing strength of the chess players from the school. The school teams have won prizes in the Norfolk Inter-schools competition on numerous occasions, including this year’s under-11 competition which they won by a wide margin, also coming second in the under-9 competition. One feature of chess at the school is the balance of girls and boys in the club; at many mixed schools boys dominate in the chess club, but not at Sheringham, where it is almost always 50-50. Indeed, the top boards in both of this year’s teams were female. As Matthew mentions below, many of his players have continued to play chess after leaving the Primary School, and several have gone on to the local “Adult” club, North Norfolk, playing regularly in the Norfolk League. Naturally, a number have also represented the county at Junior level. This year we held a very successful junior tournament at the school, open to all, in which over 50 players took part.

Matthew Perry tells me:

I have been running the club since September 2001.  This year 44 children have taken part in the UK chess challenge tournament.  I am now running the tournament over 2 lunchtimes to accommodate the numbers and the children are welcome to come and practice most other lunchtimes.  At present 2 of my current students and 4 former students attend the North Norfolk club.

I think that both the quality and the sustained nature of the school’s (and Matthew’s) encouragement for chess would make it a worthy winner of this award.

Stephen Orton (Norfolk Junior organiser)

**John Clare School, Helpston**

Application for a BCET award from John Clare School Helpston

John Clare Primary School in Helpston, Peterborough, is a thriving village school. There are just over 100 pupils on roll. The school believes in providing the children with many opportunities to enhance their learning.

There has been a chess club at John Clare School since 2004, meeting after school one afternoon a week. Membership has been from 10 pupils to as many as 36 (28 at present.)

The club sessions are organised as continuous competitions in the Swiss system. All ages are welcome to join as long as they know how to move the pieces. We have had several 4 year olds taking part. All ages play in the same competition. We find that playing older children helps the young ones to improve their game.

Children have entered many tournaments over the years with varying degrees of success. We have taken part in the British Chess Challenge for about 10 years, sending many children to the Megafinal. An under 7 boy drew for second place at the Gigafinal about 3 years ago.

We have also taken part in the National Primary Schools Team Championship for several years. We play several matches against local schools during the year and 10 children played for county teams at the Midland Championship in February.

During the Winter months we have a lunch time drop-in session once a week to give children the opportunity to play friendly games and teach more children how to play.

We are fortunate in having lots of girls who play chess, almost half our members at the moment, and they are among our strongest players.

We are also fortunate in having a highly rated player from Peterborough Chess Cub come to teach the children during their weekly sessions.

John Clare Chess Club organiser, June Clement

**St John’s First School, Frome, Somerset**

St. John’s First School in Frome, Somerset is a small school of 300 pupils aged between 4 and 9. Under the inspirational leadership of the enterprising Sally Somers the school has been running an active chess club since 2009 and has introduced chess into the main school curriculum. The enthusiasm which this has engendered among the pupils has led to a Frome junior club chess being created for older children so that they can continue with their chess after leaving St. John’s. St. John’s would be a very worthy recipient of a British Chess Educational Trust Award*.*

Sally introduced chess to St. Johns with an after-school club for children who knew the moves, and a lunch time club for anyone wanting to learn from scratch. After a couple of years, the school discovered the UK Chess Challenge in 2011 and since then has always had children every year qualifying for the Gigafinal and a good number winning their age section in the Megafinal, as well as in other Somerset tournaments.

The clubs are free of charge, with a £2 per child voluntary contribution towards the UK Chess Challenge entry fee. To buy and replace equipment, the parents of chess players raise money from a refreshments stall at the annual tournament (see below). In this way, the school recently added 4 tournament clocks to the existing 16 tournament sets and other equipment.

The success of the after-school club was such that in 2014 chess was introduced into the main school lesson-time curriculum. The Chess in Schools curriculum is taught to both Year 3 classes in the school for one hour a week for each class in lesson time. This has been very popular with children and parents alike, and has resulted in even higher numbers of very keen and able chess players, including noticeably more girls than before, involving and enthusing the teachers concerned as well.

The after-school club is always full, with 30 children, and has a long waiting list, and so Sally now runs an overspill lunchtime club for everyone else, which also fills up with well over 30 every week.

This year there were five St John’s pupils from Year 4 selected for the Somerset Under 9 team, which is the highest number from any one school. The team recently qualified for the final of the EPSCA championship.

The school also hosts an annual SPSCA (Somerset Primary Schools Chess Association) junior tournament that as part of the “grand prix” series of tournaments in the county, with between 80 and 100 entries per year.

**Heathside Preparatory School**

16 New End

London, NW3 1JA

[office@heathsideprep.co.uk](mailto:office@heathsideprep.co.uk)    0207 794 5857

Head Teacher: Ms Melissa Remus

I would like to nominate Heathside Preparatory School for the BCET award.

Heathside Preparatory School is a small friendly independent day school with over 250 pupils between the ages of 3 and 13 years old.  Heathside has always believed chess to be a fundamental part of the school. The school recognises the importance of the game for the children who play it which is why chess is incorporated into the curriculum from reception players to Year 2.

The school runs three different types of chess club (chess club, morning chess and tough chess) three times a week which is attended by around 80 children from all years from reception upwards and we have even had one nursery student playing! Between the curriculum and the clubs there are over 100 children playing at the school in total. There is a spread of ability which enables the children to play others of an equal strength irrespective of age. The school headmistress Ms Remus is a big supporter of chess and she encourages it throughout Heathside. This passion has cascaded down within the school and other chess coaches.

There are seven chess coaches who are at the school regularly and four of them are women. This is really inspiring to our girls and we have a girls-only chess every few weeks within our chess club. This has allowed our girls to feel empowered to play to their highest ability and they don’t fear playing or even beating the boys. We have around 30 girls who play chess at Heathside which is a number that has grown and we hope will keep growing.

The School takes part an extensive fixture list including the Barnet Junior Chess League, the UK Land Chess Challenge and also has the time to play friendlies with other schools in the area.  Children also regularly attend ECF and EPSCA chess events as well as going to the London Chess Classics yearly. Many of the juniors are really passionate about chess that they play in tournaments weekly or play chess online.

Heathside have been the English Primary Schools Chess Association’s Champion and they also held the title of the National Small School Champion for eight years. Heathside have regularly donated or sponsored  ECF events throughout the year as we understand the importance for chess to grow not just at Heathside but across the country.

Personally for me what I love most about chess at Heathside is how inclusive it is. No matter your ability or your age you have a chance to thrive and to learn and enjoy the game. Chess is widely respected at the school and chess there really is seen as cool. Our players are extremely independent, thoughtful and supportive of one another in the team. There is no event too big or too small for our juniors who even though most were U11 took part in the National U19 chess championships.

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Lateefah Messam-Sparks

Head Chess Coach at Heathside Preparatory School

* SOUTHERN COUNTIES CHESS UNION

FOUNDED 1892

Citation for the British Chess Educational Trust

The East Mitcham Schools Cluster

Chess in Schools and Communities and the Southern Counties Chess Union would like to

nominate the East Mitcham Schools Cluster for a British Chess Educational Trust Award.

The East Mitcham Schools Cluster (EMSC) is made up of eight different primary schools:

Beecholme, Gorringe Park, Links, Lonesome, Sherwood, Singlegate, Stanford and William

Morris. We are nominating the schools collectively for an award because their chess

programmes are coordinated centrally by Madeleine Swords, EMSC Cluster Development

and Project Manager

Context

The EMSC is located in areas of considerable economic deprivation with Figges Marsh and

Pollards Hill being two of the poorest wards in London. There is a considerable diversity in

backgrounds of the pupils, the largest ethnic groups being Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan,

Polish, Jamaican, Ghanaian, Nigerian, Bulgarian and English.

For the majority of EMSC pupils English is an additional language (EAL). Individually the

pupil EAL rate for EMSC schools ranges from 47% (Sherwood) to 88% (Gorringe). The

proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals is higher than average and a number of

the pupils’ families face multiple housing and immigration issues.

The EMSC Chess Programme

Year One

The EMSC chess programme began in the 2014/15 academic year with five schools having a

total of eight Chess in Schools and Communities (CSC) curriculum time chess classes each

week. The programmes ran for a total of 30 weeks over the school year. Towards the end of

the year EMSC arranged a tournament for 64 of the children who had had CSC chess lessons.

Year Two

As a result of the popularity of the chess programme, three more schools joined the original

five for the 2015/16 academic year. The number of classes expanded from eight to thirteen.

During a trip to the London Chess Classic in December 2015 one of the EMSC schools -

Links Primary - finished in third place in a schools’ event tournament. The EMSC internal

summer term tournament has quadrupled and up to 250 children will take part this time

around.

Year Three

Although at the time of writing the 2016/2017 academic year is still six months away,

consultations for the development of next year’s EMSC chess programme have already

begun. The programme has begun to generate interest in the community in general and local

MP Siobhain McDonagh has expressed an interest in visiting a school to see the chess

programme in action for herself.

Impact

Madeleine Swords, EMSC Cluster Development and Project Manager said,

Chess is seen as a great opportunity for pupils to develop concentration, strategic thinking

and an understanding of fair play. It is an international game which though not common

across all cultures is respected by many. Our children benefit hugely from the opportunity to

participate in the game- we believe that chess helps pupils and their families raise

expectations of what they can achieve.

One parent said,

My son <name withheld> has loved having the opportunity to learn and play chess at Links

Primary School. Their tutor combines an expert level of chess skills with a passion for the

game that is contagious for the children. I have seen my son's concentration deepen and

extend, his confidence grow and he has learned many skills that he is transferring to other

parts of his life. The chess has given him an opportunity to enjoy competition, to take risks

and to improve his strategic thinking.

The tutor has been committed and compassionate and the children have loved getting to

know him.

EMSC has achieved tournament success at the London Chess Classic, but above everything

else they have adhered to a philosophy for 'chess for all'. Year 4 pupils throughout the area

have been given a chance to play and enjoy chess

It is clear that there is an enthusiasm for chess amongst pupils and staff alike. Thanks to

Madeleine Swords in particular, the scheme has expanded from zero to approximately 400

pupils within two school years, with the vast majority of those children coming from groups

least likely to be exposed to the game.

Jonathan Bryant, London Coordinator, Chess in Schools and Communities

David Sedgwick, on behalf of the Southern Counties Chess Union

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Chess in Schools and Communities and the Southern Counties Chess Union would like to nominate the East Mitcham Schools Cluster for a British Chess Educational Trust Award.

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