

English Girls Chess Championships 19-20 October at Blenheim Palace

This email provides reminders and further information about the day – please read this in conjunction with the entry form which has information about parental supervision, round times for the sections and such like. If you have not already done so, you can download a link from the online entry page at the ECF Juniors website [here](#).

Arrival

Please aim to arrive at least 30-45 minutes before the advertised start time, to allow for parking, finding the playing area and registering there. Make sure that you have your tickets for access to Blenheim Palace grounds (both the free entry for player + 1 responsible adult and any additional concessional rate tickets you bought from the link received on your registration confirmation). Please also bring a copy of your tournament registration confirmation. I am told that this weekend access is only through the Woodstock Gate (“35” on the downloadable [map](#)).

Registration, Opening Ceremony and Tournament Start Times

Registration for all participants and accompanying adults is outside the Campaign Rooms entrance to the Orangery (labelled “⑤” and “② Orangery Restaurant” on the [downloaded map](#) from the Blenheim Palace website). Here you will be provided with wristbands for access to the playing area and adjacent rooms for parents and accompanying persons. An official event photographer will be taking photos throughout the event for publicity purposes. Please avoid taking your own photos in the playing area. If you do not wish your child to appear in chess-related tournament photographs please mention this at the registration desk.

The official Opening Ceremony is at 10:00 on Saturday in the Orangery. After the opening ceremony, children playing in the Minor sections will remain there for pre-round announcements before the start of round 1 at 10:30. Those playing in the main Championship will be escorted across the quad to the Spencer-Churchill Room where their tournament will be played (also 10:30 start time for round 1). On Sunday, clocks start in all sections at 10:30, but there will be some pre-tournament announcements in the Orangery playing area for those in the Minor sections.

Pairings, Results and Live Boards

Pairings and results for each round will be available on [chess-results.com](#) and print-outs displayed outside and/or just inside the relevant playing areas. The live boards from the Championship will be broadcast at [www.englishchess.org.uk/EGCC2019](#).

Food and Drink

You are permitted to bring your own food and drink to eat in the Marlborough Room (parents’ room adjacent to the Orangery playing area) and other waiting areas as long as litter is taken away. Café facilities are also available on site. A simple food offer will be for sale in the Marlborough Room during the tournaments and a bar selling wine and soft drinks available in the Palace for the Saturday evening simul.

Blenheim Palace and Grounds

Your free participant or concessionary accompanying person tickets give you access to wander the Blenheim Palace grounds and enter the chess tournament areas (although only players are permitted in the playing areas during the rounds themselves). If you wish to explore the Palace itself or attend the simul as a spectator, upgrade tickets are available for £10 from the relevant kiosks.

Prizes, Trophies and Tie Break Rules

The Championship prize giving will be at 18:30 on Sunday.

The overall winner of the Championship will be declared ECF English Girls Chess Champion (2019) and will be awarded a trophy to keep plus books and signed photographs by GM Judit Polgar. The top Oxfordshire girl will win an additional trophy and prize, and she will be awarded the title of Oxfordshire Girls Chess Champion and presented with the trophy to keep for a year. In the event of a tie for first place, the titles shall be shared and additional trophies may be awarded, but the book prize will be

awarded to the overall winner according to tie breaks (see below). A small trophy will be awarded to any player scoring 3 points or more who has not won one of the main trophies.

The top girl from each of the age groups Under 18, Under 16, Under 14 and Under 12 in the Championship will receive an invitation to play for England Juniors in an international event during 2019-2020, subject to being eligible to do so (e.g. age at date of tournament, ENG affiliation and ECF Gold membership). Note that the invitation is to play in the event, not for the funding to pay for the costs of doing so.

Prize giving for the Minor tournaments will be in the Orangery at 16:30 on both days.

The overall winners of each Minor tournament will win a trophy to keep and a book signed by GM Judit Polgar or WGM Jennifer Shahade. An additional trophy and prize will be presented to the top Oxfordshire girl in each tournament. In the event of a tie for first place, additional trophies may be awarded, but the book prize will be awarded to the overall winner according to tie breaks (see below). A small trophy will be awarded to any player scoring 3 ½ points or more who has not won one of the main trophies.

The tiebreak system, where applicable, will be the one used in the Delancey UK Schools Chess Challenge, namely:

1. Direct Encounter, 2. Median-Buchholz, 3. Buchholz Cut 1, 4. Buchholz, 5. Drawing of Lots

If at any point the number of players involved in the tie is reduced by applying one of the above tie-breaks from 1 to 4, then the remaining tied players should be split by the same procedure, starting back at 1. Direct Encounter. These tie breaks are described in detail in the [FIDE handbook](#).

Simultaneous Exhibition Match

The Saturday evening simul vs WFM Sarah Longson is scheduled for 17:00 in the Library. The invited players should meet at the Orangery prize giving to be escorted to the Library. Spectators are permitted in the Library, but apart from those invited to play and one accompanying adult, the purchase of additional concessionary tickets to the Palace itself (rather than just the grounds) will be required. There will be a bar serving wine and soft drinks but please do not bring your own food or drink (other than water bottles) into the Library. The event is scheduled to finish before 21:00.