

English Schools Girls Chess Championships 2023/24 Rules

Section A: Introduction

1. The English Schools Girls Chess Championship is open to all schools in England. In the interests of safeguarding, the ECF requires that all teams are accompanied by at least one adult with each team who is both approved by the senior management of that school and has a current Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Clearance Certificate for working with children. Additional adult supervisors must also meet these conditions.
2. A school may enter as many teams as it wishes as set out by the rest of these rules. Teams will be designated A, B, C and so on. The A team must be the strongest, the B team the second strongest, and so on. Players may not be listed as a member of more than one team in the same tournament.
3. Each team should be composed of:
 - Three players
 - One captain, who should be an adult representative of the school (see Rule A1)
 - Optionally, in the Over-the-Board tournaments only, a maximum of one reserve player
4. As a condition of playing in this competition, schools should provide the name, gender and date of birth of all players who participate in the tournament for ECF rating. This data will be stored on the ECF rating server. The name, gender and school represented will appear on the ECF rating website (see Annex 1) in public. More information can be found in the ECF Rules for Acceptance of Games for Rating (see Annex 1).
5. As a condition of playing in this competition, schools agree that the results of the tournament can appear on Chess-Results.com, the English Chess Federation website, and in other English Chess Federation material (including the e-newsletter).

Section B: Eligibility

1. The Championships is played in two age sections. The eligibility for each section is as follows:
 - For the Under 19 section: Under 19 on the 31st August 2023.
 - For the Under 11 section: Under 11 on the 31st August 2023.
2. Each player must be a pupil on the roll of the school they represent at the entry deadline.
3. Any claim of ineligibility, or other complaint, must be submitted by email within 48 hours of the end of the tournament to the English Chess Federation's Director of Junior Chess, whose decision will be final.
4. If any player is found to be ineligible, their game will count as lost by default. Additionally, for each ineligible player in a team, one half penalty point will be deducted from the team's score in that match.

Section C: Organisation of the Competition

1. The Championship is organised with the following stages:
 - Two Over-the-Board Semi Finals
 - One Online Semi Final
 - One Over-the-Board Final
2. Schools may enter as many teams as they wish into:
 - A maximum of one Over-the-Board Semi Final
 - The Online Semi Final, only if
 - The school did not enter an Over-the-Board Semi Final, or
 - The school has not qualified for the Final, or
 - The school chooses a team of players who was not listed on the teamsheet in any match of their Over-the-Board Semi Final.

3. All play in this competition will be in accordance with the FIDE Laws of Chess (see Annex 1) as of 1 January 2023, except as herein provided:
 - In the Under 11 section, the number of illegal moves required to lose the game will increase from 2 to 3 for the whole game. The second illegal move will incur the same penalty as the first illegal move.

Section D: Over-the-Board Semi Finals

1. Schools must provide the information to the Organiser specified in Rule A4, for each player in each of their teams by 5pm on the Friday before the tournament.
2. Each team should be listed in a fixed board order from 1 to 3 (or 1 to 4 in case a reserve is chosen), which may not be varied during the tournament. Players who play their games in the wrong order will lose their game by default.
3. The team captain can choose any of their three players to play in each match (i.e. they can put their reserve player in the team). This must be recorded on the match sheet before the start of the round.
4. A team with only 2 players present must default on the board 3. A team with only 1 player present will not be paired in the tournament.
5. The tournament will consist of 5 rounds.
6. The team pairings for each round will be done using Swiss-Manager, using the inbuilt pairing engine in the software.
7. The team on the “left” of a pairing will be white on boards 1 and 3, and black on board 2.
8. The time limit for each game will be 20 minutes plus 10 seconds per move.
9. A player who is not present between the start of the round and the time on their clock expires, will lose their game by forfeit.
10. The team score will be reckoned by Gamepoints; the individual results of each player added up. The tie-breaks will be:
 - Direct Encounter (the result of the head-to-head match(es)).
 - Board Count (Board 1 Gamepoints + 2*Board 2 Gamepoints + 3*Board 3 Gamepoints; whichever total is lower finishes ahead in the standings).
 - Board Elimination (remove the Gamepoints won by board 3, and compare the totals; if this fails to resolve the tie, repeat by removing board 2).
11. The following teams will qualify for the Final:
 - Two highest-ranked teams in the Northern Semi Final
 - Six highest-ranked teams in the Southern Semi Final

Section E: Online Semi Final

1. Schools must provide the information to the Organiser specified in Rule A4, plus their Lichess username, for each player in each of their teams by 5pm on the Friday before the tournament.
2. Schools will need to create their own team on Lichess for the tournament, whose membership should be the adult supervisor, and the three members of the team only. The Organiser must be informed of the name of the team.
3. The teams will be included in a Lichess Team Battle, which is an Arena (see Annex 2) where players cannot play against players in their own team. The Arena will have “Arena Streaks” and “Berserk” mode disabled. The duration of the Team Battle will be 60 minutes.
4. The time limit for each game will be 5 minutes plus 3 seconds per move.
5. Players whose usernames are marked with a Terms of Service violation cannot participate in this competition. Players should appeal to resolve it (see Annex 2).
6. The score and tie-breaks will be reckoned in accordance with Lichess Arena rules (see Annex, and Rule E3).

7. All games should be supervised by the adult at their school. In addition, games will be monitored by Lichess's Fair Play system. The Organiser will send the games to FIDE (World Chess Federation) for analysis, and the Organisers may report suspicious cases to Lichess for further investigation.
8. The Organisers reserve the right to adjust the scores of the tournament if it is determined that a player has received a Terms of Service violation by Lichess because of their play in this tournament.
9. The two highest-ranked teams will qualify for the Final.

Section F: Over-the-Board Final

1. Schools must provide the information to the Organiser specified in Rule A4, for each player in each of their teams by 5pm on the Thursday before the tournament.
2. Each team should be listed in a fixed board order from 1 to 3 (or 1 to 4 in case a reserve is chosen), which may not be varied during the tournament. Players who play their games in the wrong order will lose their game by default.
3. The team captain can choose any of their three players to play in each match (i.e. they can put their reserve player in the team). This must be recorded on the match sheet before the start of the round.
4. A team with only 2 players present must default on the board 3. A team with only 1 player present will not be paired in the tournament.
5. The tournament will consist of 9 rounds.
6. The tournament will be a Round Robin tournament; a team will play all of the other teams.
7. The team on the "left" of a pairing will be white on boards 1 and 3, and black on board 2.
8. The time limit for each game will be 25 minutes plus 10 seconds per move.
9. A player who is not present between the start of the round and the time on their clock expires, will lose their game by forfeit.
10. The team score will be reckoned by Gamepoints; the individual results of each player added up. The tie-breaks will be:
 - Direct Encounter (the result of the head-to-head match(es)).
 - Board Count (Board 1 Gamepoints + 2*Board 2 Gamepoints + 3*Board 3 Gamepoints; whichever total is lower finishes ahead in the standings).
 - Board Elimination (remove the Gamepoints won by board 3, and compare the totals; if this fails to resolve the tie, repeat by removing board 2).
11. The three highest-ranked teams, and each of their players, will win trophy prizes.

Annex 1: Over-the-Board Information

ECF Rating website: https://www.ecfrating.org.uk/v2/new/list_players.php

ECF Rules for Acceptance of Games For Rating: <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/rules-for-acceptance-of-games-for-rating-new/>

FIDE Laws of Chess: <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/E012023>

Annex 2: Lichess

Arena FAQ: <https://lichess.org/tournament/help>

Appeal: <https://lichess.org/appeal>