

Nomination for BCET Awards 2024 – Park End Primary School, Middlesbrough

Chess started in Park End in 2016, with a series of training days aimed at all of the school staff, to teach them the basics of chess. This guaranteed the impending classroom chess sessions would be very well supported by the staff from the very first lessons onwards. Pre-COVID, there were also special sessions to involve parents of the children who enjoy their chess sessions and these were very popular events.

The school currently has two full days of CSC curriculum sessions per week, which impact on every child in every class from Year 3 to Year 6. They were also one of the pioneering trial schools when CSC utilised their revolutionary online delivery during the COVID lockdowns. In recent times, they have further developed the enrichment side of chess in their school with numerous activities, including an expedition to the London Chess Classic (which included a trip to a West End theatre the night before).

Park End's chess sessions have featured on the TV news on more than one occasion and most famously when they were the main feature on BBC One's The One Show. The school also hosts the annual CSC Middlesbrough Training Day and the end of year Borough Tournament for other local schools.

Chess is always very popular at Park End. The big chess set on the playground is one of the most-used pieces of outdoor equipment and 2024's edition of the school's annual Knockout Tournament featured 311 children. There is also an annual Park End Staff Knockout Tournament, which makes for many a vibrant session in the staffroom at the end of the school year!

It is rare indeed for any school to embrace chess so fully and to provide so many excellent opportunities for the development of children, staff and parents alike.

Sean Marsh, CSC Regional Coordinator for Teesside.

As part of the broad and balanced curriculum provided by Park End Primary School, all of our Key Stage 2 children take part in weekly chess lesson with a qualified chess teacher. Our children thoroughly look forward to the lessons, key stage knock out competitions and region wide tournaments which are held in and out of school. Through chess our children are building their confidence, resilience, team building skills and problem-solving skills. All children have the opportunity to achieve in chess and we feel that our chess lessons enrich our children's lives here at Park End Primary School.

Headteacher, Park End Primary School