

Issued 11th September 2020

Dear parents, guardians and Key Stages 3 & 4 junior chess players,

Chess play at Wanstead House has been able to resume for the main club this month and it will be able to continue within the the new Rule of Six. Wanstead House has imposed restrictions on activities in line with Government advice as has Wanstead and Woodford Chess Club. Given some early positive comments from parents and junior players along with both a Government desire to see extra-curricular activities resume and a desire from the chess club to enable resumption of junior chess coaching, we propose to trial this from Tuesday 15th September. We have conducted a risk assessment and devised a safe way of playing chess in addition to our classroom style presentations.

We are inviting juniors from key stages 3 and 4 only to attend at this stage; in practice this will mean from ages 11 to 15, who we expect to keep within a segregated bubble. Our large room has been limited to 18 usage by Wanstead House and the Government limits extra-curricular groups of children to 15 within any one bubble, but the most likely scenario is 6 to 8 junior players plus Mark and myself. We will make use of separate working groups each session should we have greater numbers.

Chess play will be over two boards, each player having their own board to minimise shared surfaces, sitting at table ends to maintain distancing. This method of play has been trialled successfully with the main club. Activities will include mini tournaments and presentations from the display board and the coaching will take place from 5pm to 7pm.

Face coverings must be worn at all times in the communal parts of Wanstead House unless exemptions apply (e.g. children 11 years and younger). Inside our club room, juniors of secondary age are expected to wear a face covering when in the playing area, however in line with new school practice, masks can be removed when in the classroom area for our short presentations and discussions using the chess display board.

Wanstead House no longer permits people to wait in the foyer more than a few minutes for pick-up or drop off. Some parents may wish either to use their cars for waiting or to be nearby in Wanstead; Mark and I will exercise duty of care but we would expect to have a telephone number for contact in the event of any concern. All users of Wanstead House must use the hand sanitiser and wear a mask in the buildings.

Please reply and indicate attendance (or non-attendance) for this coming Tuesday 15th September along with arrival time, departure time and the telephone contact to be used.

There is a £25 termly fee to cover the cost of room hire which will only become payable from 22nd September or in the case of new players, their second visit. Registration for each session will be available online through our website so that we can easily meet our Track & Trace obligations, for the purposes of our first session on 15th September we only need a reply to this email.

We are not abandoning our use of lichess.org and we hope to find a new time slot for on-line chess. I will shortly send out a questionnaire to find what suits players and parents best now school has resumed.

Please find attached important documentation:

1. Keeping Wanstead House safe
2. Two-boarded chess
3. Socially distanced Junior Coaching Chess Club

Regards

Ben Harte
Junior chess coordinator

Issued 12th September 2020

Dear parents and guardians of primary chess players,

Wanstead House has now re-opened for activities and the main chess club has already met twice. In order to follow official guidance, both Wanstead House and the chess club have produced risk assessments and introduced restrictions. For example it is not possible at the moment for parents to use the foyer as a waiting area.

Yesterday I sent an email to parents of secondary players detailing how chess coaching can resume for key stage 3 and 4 players. Under the our present restrictions we cannot easily offer chess coaching to key stages 1 and 2; we hope of course this will only be temporary.

I will soon be sending out a questionnaire to parents to get thoughts on our next step with on-line chess.

Despite recent local spikes, it is good to see the gradual resumption of so much. Please bear with us.

Best regards,

Ben Harte
Junior Chess Coordinator
Wanstead and Woodford Chess Club