

Nomination for BCET Awards 2024 – St William of York Catholic Primary School, Liverpool

Chess lessons began at St William of York eleven years ago, making it one of the early schools to join CSC's programme. The school has always enthusiastically supported CSC's tutors in delivering the lessons. The teachers and TAs are enormously involved. They always assist in the class, not just with monitoring behaviour, but playing other children and helping with the results of the tournaments.

St William of York has always entered the Delancey UK Chess Challenge and some of its children have gone onto success in local Megafinals. The school has regularly supported trips to London to attend the London Chess Classic Schools' Festival at Olympia. Pupils would meet their CSC tutor at Euston Station for a trip on the underground to Kensington Olympia, whilst at the festival the children enjoyed the chess coaching and competed in a chess tournament, often returning to school with medals for their performance. One highlight of the last trip in 2019 was a visit to Buckingham Palace after the tournament finished, which illustrated how the school likes to include life experiences along with their chess.

Chess is embedded throughout the school. One year the CSC tutor was invited to attend the Year 6 leaving performance and witnessed a chess dance routine with the pupils moving around like the pieces on a chess board. The school also had a visit from CSC chief executive Malcolm Pein who coached the children and then played a simultaneous against the best players. More recently, several pupils from St William of York have entered external chess tournaments and one pupil finished second out of over a hundred other competitors.

St William of York Catholic Primary School would be worthy winners of a BCET award.

Rob Steele, CSC Regional Coordinator for Merseyside

We have had some great times through our involvement with chess. So many children have gained life skills through learning chess from great teachers. We've enjoyed fun days playing 'follow my leader' through London with Bob (Bob Clark, CSC tutor)! St George's Hall has always been a highlight too.

Class teacher, St William of York Catholic Primary School