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Alfiere Bianco, an amateur sports company

www.europechesspromotion.org

Invites you to

AN ONLINE INTRODUCTORY CHESS COURSE FOR SCHOOLS

Dear Headteacher,

The playing of chess in schools for educational purposes, if practiced with sufficient frequency and with the active involvement of permanent teachers, can be a useful educational aid and a valuable instrument for enhancing cognitive skills. It is undeniable that the game of chess can be considered a true 'cognitive training ground' able to motivate children to tackle many minor problems of a cognitive nature, for which they must plan possible solutions, evaluate these solutions, decide which is best, experience their choice and receive almost immediate feedback on the consequences of their decisions. This process is useful in developing decision-making skills, responsibility for their actions and acceptance of the consequences. 'Autonomy' and 'Responsibility' are precisely the terms used to describe competence, defined by the EQF - European Qualification Framework - as the "proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and/or personal development." Teaching chess at school may also significantly improve a pupil's ability to learn mathematics, according to a study by INVALSI (the Italian National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System) conducted as part of a controlled research project (called "SAM", available at www.europechesspromotion.org on the English-language page) involving some 2,000 8 and 9-year-old children attending selected primary schools throughout Italy.

"The use of digital technology for the learning of chess in schools," was a research project by **Professor Roberto Trinchero** (University of Turin) and **Professor Domenico Parisi** (National Research Council, Rome). The study was carried out on 76 third-year classes in 50 Italian primary schools, and demonstrated that students can effectively learn the rules of chess online, by means of interactive, web-based software, without the need to employ instructors or for the regular teachers to possess any particular expertise in the game of chess.

The software employed in the study is now available online, in English, as a means of introducing students, aged between 8 and 11, to chess: incorporated into the Web platform 'Victor's Chess House' (a demo is available at www.europechesspromotion.org on the English-language page), the programme helps pupils to learn the basic rules of chess, involving them in a fully interactive course in various stages, made up of lessons, games and final trials in 12 different levels. The main features are:

- 1) Students can try out the programme, directly from their own and/or the school's PC. A series of online games enable students to learn chess in stages, either playing against the computer or in real-time with online students from other schools around the world, i.e. who are also connected via the

Internet at the same time. By the end of the course students will be ready to play a real chess game, using all the pieces.

- 2) This training course can take place both in the school and at home. The family may like to think of the course as a form of homework, with a view to improving school marks. The course can also provide an alternative to watching television or other 'screen' activities, which already tend to be used by the family to keep children occupied, and which are not always stimulating or educational.
- 3) The time frames for learning depend on each individual and so are independent from the rest of the class: this allows all children to take part, leaving sufficient time for everyone to reach the end of the programme (level 12).
- 4) The average time required to learn the basic rules is 10 hours, carried out at school or at home. Once the initial course has been completed, it is recommended that the playing of chess online be continued, reaching 20 hours or more, to enable the development of students' visual-spatial skills.
- 5) At the end of the introductory course students can continue to play chess online and on the same platform for a full year, including from home, and as an integral part of the training carried out at school. It is recommended, however, that real chess boards are also used at the end of the course, for 'freestyle' playing during breaks or in lessons, and that games/chess activities are suggested by the teacher or **through collaboration with a local chess association**.
- 6) Furthermore, the suggested training is a good way **for teachers** to consolidate and/or acquire knowledge of the basic rules of the game, as well as an ideal way to expand students' skills in the constructive use of information technology.
- 7) We can also monitor each student online and send a report to the school at the end of the training, including actual time spent, scores, and the level reached by each pupil.

The full programme, for free, can be previewed upon request, by sending an email to info@europechesspromotion.org

This proposal concerns the provision of the option to activate chess training at your institution, without time restrictions and for all classes which request it. The cost of holding the course (including the option to subsequently play online) is just € 4,00 per subscriber (free for each class teacher), as a contribution to expenses incurred in maintaining the Web platform and Internet connection. This also covers access to the programme **for a full year from the date of activation**. If your educational institution would like to subscribe to the initiative, **the attached subscription form** should be filled out and sent by email to info@europechesspromotion.org or by fax to +3901410199265. **Initially only one referral person is required**, whom we will contact about the procedures involved. Additional contacts may be added upon enrolment. For any further information please contact Alessandro Dominici: **tel. 0039393/2277051 – email info@europechesspromotion.org – website www.europechesspromotion.org**

Yours faithfully,

Alessandro Dominici,
Chairman of Alfiere Bianco



Subscription Form

This form deals exclusively with access to the computer system in order to set up the chess programme, and involves no specific undertaking by the school to activate the project.

This page, with the DATA SHEET filled in, must be sent by fax to 003901410199265, or by email to info@eurochesspromotion.org

After pre-enrolment, the teacher responsible will receive, by email, all documentation regarding technical specifications of computer equipment, in order to verify both hardware and broadband connection quality.

Verification is required in order to provide an appropriate level of service, so avoiding any technical problems which could arise from the unsuitability of the school's computer equipment.

Once approval has been made, the final enrolment form will be sent, with instructions on user enrolment and administrative procedures. The cost of the service is €4 for each user, valid for a year from the date of enrolment, and with no time restrictions.

A standard invoice will be issued by Alfiere Bianco.

DATA SHEET

Educational institution _____
Address _____
Postcode _____ City _____
County/State _____
VAT No. _____ National Insurance No _____
Tel. _____ Fax _____ Email _____
Number of classes involved _____ Expected number of participating students _____
Chess group proposing the initiative (if any) _____
_____ Teacher responsible _____
Teacher's email _____ . Teacher's telephone no. _____
Location _____ Date _____