

# CSC

Chess in  
Schools and  
Communities



# Club CSC UK

the country's largest ever chess club!



## Club CSC UK



### ★ Weekly Star Rush ★

Congratulations to our leading star earners this week!

- 1st. MedhaKris 1757 ★
- 2nd. BlueWhaleShark 807 ★
- 3rd. Ysklion 410 ★

Top 25 scores each week win an online trophy!



### Puzzle League Table

We've now got a record twelve ChessKids with Puzzles Ratings over 2000, a fantastic achievement. Here is the current leaderboard:

BKCalvin 2536  
STMS4 2462  
Calbha 2254

## Club UK CSC event calendar

Our tournaments usually consist of 5 rounds with each player getting 10 minutes for each game. That means the whole event lasts roughly 1.5hrs. While we don't want to reinvent something that seems to be working well, we wondered whether a one-off tournament with a shorter time control would go down well. Does anyone fancy a blitz tournament, 5 minutes per player per game? Email us if you do.

- All week:** Star Rush. Earn as many ChessKid stars as you can (ends 7pm, Sunday 27th September).
- Monday 21st Sept., 4pm:** Fast Play Tournament
- Tuesday 22nd Sept., 4pm:** Fast Play Tournament
- Wednesday 23rd Sept., 4pm:** Fast Play Tournament
- Thursday 24th Sept., 4pm:** Fast Play Tournament
- Friday 25th Sept., 4pm:** Fast Play Tournament
- Saturday 26th Sept., 11am:** Beat The Teacher Hour
- Saturday 26th Sept., 4pm:** Fast Play Tournament
- Sunday 27th Sept., 4pm:** Beat The Teacher Hour
- Sunday 27th Sept., 4pm:** Rookie Rooks

Please note: for stability of connection, we recommend using Google Chrome or Firefox when playing in tournaments



## Exchange chess

Our ChessKids are a bloodthirsty lot. Give them the chance to capture a piece and they'll almost always take it, whether it's a gain of material or an exchange. In general, exchanging pieces favours the side with a material advantage. A lead in material of 10 points to 5 points is far more significant than a lead of 35 points to 30. With less material your opponent has fewer counter-attacking chances, reducing the risk of a fight-back. The possible exception to this is exchanging pawns. Many endgames are decided by pawn promotion. It's all very well being ahead on material but to convert your advantage to a victory you may need to force a pawn to the far end of the board. A single pawn is enough to win the game, but it's impossible to force checkmate with two knights on their own. It's therefore very important to look after your pawns as you exchange down to an endgame. They may be the most humble of pieces, but they're often critical to your success.

White encountered exactly this problem in this week's game. They played very well in the opening and middlegame to build a winning advantage. They retained the material advantage right to the end of the game. However, Black came up with the excellent defensive strategy of exchanging as many pawns as possible. White wasn't able to find a plan to stop this and gradually saw each of their seven pawns (that's seven potential queens!) swapped off the board. A bishop up in the final position, White left with insufficient material for force checkmate and a draw was the outcome. One of the difficulties of chess is finding the correct strategic plan. Once you've got a good plan, all you need to do is stick to it!

White: BlueWhaleShark  
 Black: FascinatedChipmunk  
**ChessKid game, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

- |    |            |            |
|----|------------|------------|
| 1. | <b>e4</b>  | <b>e5</b>  |
| 2. | <b>Nf3</b> | <b>Nc6</b> |
| 3. | <b>Nc3</b> | <b>Bb4</b> |

An unusual move, though it's been played by grandmasters. By far the most common response to White's opening is 3...Nf6, the Four Knights Game. With 3...Bb4 we enter the Three Knights Game, where the early bishop move can be exploited by 4. Nd5.

- |    |             |             |
|----|-------------|-------------|
| 4. | <b>Bc4</b>  | <b>Bxc3</b> |
| 5. | <b>dxc3</b> | <b>Nf6</b>  |
| 6. | <b>0-0</b>  | <b>0-0</b>  |
| 7. | <b>Re1</b>  | <b>d6</b>   |

Both sides have made sensible developing moves, bringing their minor pieces out towards the centre of the board and ensuring their king finds safety by castling. The game is approximately level.

White's next move gangs up on the f7 pawn but it's a hollow threat. We've seen before that although material would be level after 9. Nxf7 Rxf7 10. Bxf7+ Kxf7, the position would favour Black. White's knight is soon forced to retreat, wasting time, or "costing a tempo".

- |    |            |            |
|----|------------|------------|
| 8. | <b>Ng5</b> | <b>h6</b>  |
| 9. | <b>Nf3</b> | <b>Bg4</b> |



When the game begins 1. e4 e5, Black often has a dilemma as to where to develop their white-squared bishop. The square f5 is impossible, while on d7 the bishop would leave the queen cramped. That leaves e6 or g4. The first of these is often a good choice: it blocks the bishop on c4, and is White plays Bxe6, Black can recapture with the f-pawn, opening up the f-file for the Black rook. The move played is also good. After 10. h3, Black has a choice, to exchange or retreat to h5.

**10. h3 Bxf3**

Black elects to exchange. While there's nothing wrong with this move, 10...Bh5 would have maintained the pin on the white knight, putting White under a little pressure. Black would have retained the option of exchanging later in the game. True, White can break the pin with 11. g4 but this weakens the king's defences.

**11. Qxf3 Ne7**

**12. Be3 Ng6**

**13. Rad1 Nh4**

Over the last few moves Black has carefully manouevred their knight from the queenside to the kingside where it is ready to both defend Black's king and attack White's. However, it's too early for the knights to begin their advance by 13...Nh4. Better was 13...Qe7, removing the queen from the d-file where it is lined up with White's rook on d1.

**14. Qg3**



Now the knight is in trouble. It is attacked by White's queen and can no longer retreat: 14...Ng6 15. Qxg6 and the pawn on f7 is pinned by White's bishop on c4. On top of that, White has a further threat of 15. Bxh6, exploiting the pin along the g-file. The power of the two bishops is beginning to show.

**14. Nxe4**

**15. Qg4 d5**

15...Ng5 was a nice trick (16. Qxh4 Nf3+ wins White's queen to a discovered attack!). However, after the cool 16. Kf1 White threatens to capture Black's knight on h4 as there's no longer a discovered attack. 16...Ng6 17. h4 Nh7 18. Qxg6 wins a piece.

### The Two Bishops

Most chess books will tell you that a bishop and knight are both worth three points (a pawn is one point). Whether a bishop is more or less valuable than a knight depends on the position. If the board is blocked with pawns, the hopping knight can be more powerful than a bishop. However, if the position is more open, the longer range of the bishop takes over. There's little doubt that two bishops, working together, can be a formidable force, and can easily overwhelm two knights. In this game the two bishops are already causing Black problems, angling towards the kingside and creating and exploiting pins.

**16. Rxd5 Nf6**

**17. Rxd8 Nxg4**

**18. Rxf8 Rxf8**

**19. hxg4 Ng6**



A series of exchanges has left White a piece ahead. They've also retained the two bishops. With their next two moves they grab the only open file for their rook. and position it on the seventh rank where it attacks the Black pawns. White has a winning advantage.

**20. Rd1 a6**

**21. Rd7 b5**

**22. Bd5 Rc8**

**23. Bb7 Rf8**

**24. Rxc7 a5**

**25. b3 Rd8**

**26. Bb6 Rd2**



White increased their advantage and is now four points ahead. There are many ways to turn a winning position into a victory but it's always worth taking stock and making a plan. One tried and trusted method is to exchange pieces. Here the material count stands at 18 for White and 14 for Black: White has roughly 29% more material. If White can exchange rooks and a minor piece, the count would be 10 (White) and 6 (Black), a 67% advantage. White's advantage has been magnified.

While it's good to exchange pieces, it's often worth keeping pawns on the board. You may need to promote one of these to achieve checkmate. White has seven pawns, seven chances to make a new queen. Here, 27. Rc8+ Kh7 28. Be4 would have protected the c2-pawn and pinned the Black knight, possibly preparing for an exchange of minor pieces.

- 27. Bxa5 Rxc2
- 28. a4 bxa4
- 29. bxa4 Ra2
- 30. Bb6 Rxa4
- 31. c4 Nf8

Now 32. Rc8 would have pinned the knight. After 33. Bc5 the Black piece would have been lost.

- 32. c5 Ne6
- 33. Re7 Kf8



White had a simplifying tactic available here: 34. Rxe6 fxe6 35. c6 and there's nothing Black can do to prevent c5-c6-c7-c8, promoting to a new queen. The new queen will cost Black their rook, leaving White two bishops ahead.

- 34. Rd7 Ra1+
- 35. Kb2 Ke8
- 36. c6 Rb1
- 37. Be3 g6

Here, the simplest path to victory was 38. c7. Black can only stop the promotion at the expense of their knight: 38...Nxc7 39. Rxc7.

- 38. Bc8 Rb8
- 39. Ba6 Rd8
- 40. Bb5 Rxd7
- 41. cxd7+ Ke7
- 42. Bb6 f6
- 43. Kh3 g5
- 44. Kg3 e4



The situation has changed but White has retained their advantage. White now exchanges bishop for knight but at the expense of their biggest weapon, the d-pawn. Black was completely tied down to preventing promotion. There was no need to rush. White's pawns are fast running out. Suppose instead White had played Kg3-h2-g1-f1-f2-e3 and captured the pawn on e4. Black could only watch while White carries out this plan, improving their position all the time.

- 45. Bc4 Kxd7
- 46. Bxe6+ Kxe6

Let's compare this position with the position after move 26. White is still ahead on material. However to win the game they will need to promote to a new queen. After various pawn exchanges they only have three opportunities left to do this. After White's next move this is reduced to two!

- 47. f3 exf3

White now needs to tread very carefully indeed to avoid all their remaining pawns being exchanged. The best move here was 48. Kxf3, activating the king. After 48...f5 49. Bd4 f4 50. Ke4 Black's king is forced to retreat leaving White's pieces free to head towards their kingside pawns.

**48. gxf3 Ke5**

Even better here was 48...Kf7. Black heads for g6 with the king, supporting the advance of f- and h- pawns. Black's plan is clear: exchange all the pawns and the position will be drawn. It doesn't matter if it cost Black all their remaining pawns to do this. As long as all of White's pawns are exchanged they'll have insufficient material left to checkmate.



Now 49. Bc5 would still have won for White. The idea is to stop Black's next excellent move, which would fail because if 49...f5 50.

Bf8 fxc4 51. fxc4. White wins the pawn on h6, eventually captures the g-pawn, and makes a new queen by carefully advancing their final pawn down the board. Why not give it a go to make sure you know the technique?

**49. Be3 f5**

Now there's nothing that can be done to avoid the draw. If 50. Bc5 Kf6 51. Bf8 fxc4 52. fxc4 Kg6 when Black's next move (53...h5) will force the exchange of White's final pawn. If, in this variation, 52. Kxc4 Kg6 53. Kg3 h5 54. Bd6 Kf5, White cannot make any progress.

**50. f4+ gxf4+**

**51. Bxf4+ Kf6**

**52. Bxh6 fxg4**

**53. Kxc4**

#### Game drawn by insufficient material

A very hard fought game featuring some excellent play by both sides. White gained the advantage of the two bishops and soon converted this into a winning position. Black fought well in defence and came up with the strategy of exchanging as many White pawns as possible. It worked! White remained three points ahead in the final position but without a pawn left to promote, checkmate wasn't possible.

Exchanging pieces is an excellent way to convert your advantage, but make sure you keep some pawns in reserve. You may just need them to finish off your opponent.

Well done to both players!

# Test your tactics!

This week's puzzles feature tactics in games played in our daily Fast Play tournaments in the past week. Have you played an excellent game or found a great tactic? Ask your parents to email us with details of the game: [chesskidparent@chessinschools.co.uk](mailto:chesskidparent@chessinschools.co.uk). Answers below.

- Both sides have developed their pieces well but White has more space and a central mass of pawns. Can you see how they exploited that advantage to win some material?



- Black has brought their queen out very early in the game. This is often a mistake. Can you see how White took full advantage?



- Again, the Black queen has been developed early. Can you see how White won the Black queen? If you think you've found two ways, be careful – only one works!



Answers to Test Your Tactics.

1. e5 attacks and wins the pinned knight. Black can try 1...h6 2. Bh4 g5, but after 3. Nxg5 hxg5 4. Bxg5 White regains the knight, has won two pawns, and has exposed the Black's king.
1. Bd3 traps the Black queen in the middle of the board! That's why the queen is best left at home until later in the game.
1. Ng5+ uncovers an attack on the Black queen by her White counterpart. 1. Ne5+ is also a discovered attack, but 1...Nxex5 stops the check and defends the queen!

## FunMasterMike's Video of the Week

ChessKid has a huge selection of instructional videos available to CSC children with their gold account. You can search the library to find one covering every aspect of chess, tailored to the ability of your child. Each week, FunMasterMike, Director of Content at ChessKid, selects a video for our newsletter. This week: [Discovered Attacks and Double Checks](#).



## Home Learning

Chess in Schools and Communities (CSC) is delighted to offer schools and parents a range of resources suitable for Home Learning. The material is split into a series of lessons, adapted from the curriculum our tutors normally deliver in over 340 schools across the country each week. There are YouTube videos, worksheets, and Kahoot quizzes to accompany each lesson. The course assumes no prior knowledge of chess and is suitable for complete beginners. The programme is now complete and can be found [here](#).

## About CSC

CSC is a UK charity whose mission is to improve children's educational outcomes and social development by introducing them to the game of chess. Founded in 2009, we now teach weekly chess lessons in class time in over 300 schools and support over 700 more school chess clubs nationwide. To find out more about what CSC can offer a school, please email [info@chessinschools.co.uk](mailto:info@chessinschools.co.uk).

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