



PRESS RELEASE

'St Catherine's School welcomes girls from a wealth of schools across the country for the Annual English Chess Federation Girls' Championship Semi Final'
Sunday 17th January 2016 -10am to 5pm



Excitement is palpable in the build-up to this year's chess competition, which will see unprecedented numbers of participants from both state and independent schools converging at St Catherine's, Bramley. This is possibly the largest ever girls-only chess event in the UK.

The fascination of this ancient game brings together people of different backgrounds, creeds, nationalities and languages is captivating and the girls taking part look forward to enjoying the many rewards of chess: the ability to visualise, analyse, think critically and use one's rational faculties to react effectively to pressure and time constraints. Crucially, there will be much discussion and collaboration, which will create a community and strengthen links between different schools.

Andrew Martin, Girls' Tournament Director, said, 'Girls chess is on the up, thanks to the English Chess Federation and St Catherine's School working in harmony. Entries to the ECF National Girls Schools Championships have increased each year. We now have a record number of girls taking part. The Southern semi final at St Catherine's currently has 60 teams and 180 players from 24 schools all over the South of England of England. Everyone is looking forward to what should be an exciting and challenging tournament'. International Master, Andrew Martin, anticipates this to be the largest number of girls gathered to play in a tournament on record.

Nick Morgan, Head of Chess at St Catherine's Senior School, said, 'We are now into our third year of hosting the semi-finals and anticipate a high level of skill and sportsmanship from a wide range of schools. It is a wonderful opportunity to promote the game and for girls to enjoy competitive play in a supportive and friendly environment.'

Naomi Bartholomew, Prep School Headmistress said, 'I am delighted to hear that the tournament has grown in size and is a brilliant example of schools working together in partnership'.

Abigail, aged 11 years, said, 'I am excited for the chess semi-final because it will be an opportunity to meet a lot of new people from many different schools. Sometimes your opponent will give you tips after your match, so you can learn something new'.

Further information: 10am First round, 3pm mid tournament and 5pm Prizegiving

Ends -

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