

# IAPS ONLINE CHESS 2025-2026

## Teacher information pack

Bonus team qualifier – Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025, 3.30pm.



Team Qualifier and Individual Championship – **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026, 3.30pm**

Team Final – **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2026, 3.30pm**

# WHAT'S INCLUDED?



- Introduce the IAPS chess team
- Overview of the tournament(s) and who it's for
- Key dates
- Tournament format
- Expectations – pupils and teachers
- Online safety
- Setting up accounts/teams on Lichess
- Questions

# INTRODUCING OUR CHESS EXPERT...



Nick Thomas is an International Chess Federation (FIDE) Master and a level 4 (top level) ECF registered chess coach. Nick has extensive experience working with school-age chess players, with notable successes as both a manager and coach.

**Lichess username: Athomnick**

## WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

- We know chess is popular in our schools and is an ideal activity to compete in online.
- Pupils can compete in online chess battles against other IAPS schools. The winning schools and highest-scoring individuals will gain the title of IAPS Online Chess Champion.
- Battles will take place on [Lichess](#), which is a free online chess server.
- Led by chess experts – Nick and Alex.
- Pupils can win medals and awards.
- Following a successful first year in which pupils enjoyed competing against other IAPS pupils, this activity will continue and build on that success this year.



# WHO IS IT FOR?

- For pupils normally in Yr3 - Yr8. Some schools may want to occasionally include particularly talented younger pupils.
- Teams - no minimum or maximum number so a team of one or one hundred is ok!
- Ideally for pupils with some chess playing experience.
- This tournament isn't for beginners – however, if you have pupils who are interested and haven't played before, then encourage them to join your chess club and work towards entering next year!



# KEY DATES

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025

Entries open

A 'bonus' team qualifier has already taken place, but the main team qualifier will take place in March.

September 2025 – November 2025

- Set up accounts/teams
- Read all Q&A and FAQ Info

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Training tournament at 4.30pm

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Bonus team qualifier at 3.30pm

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Training tournament at 4.30pm

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Team qualifier/individual competition 3.30pm

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2026

Team Final 3:30pm



# TOURNAMENT FORMAT – TEAM BATTLES

## IAPS Team/Individual Online Tournament

The tournament will be conducted as a 'Team Battle' on Lichess. This is a type of 'Arena' tournament where you cannot play other players from your own team.

The online battle will last for 60 minutes, and each game is 5 minutes plus 3 seconds per move.

The TEAM date and times:

- **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 3.30pm**
- **FINAL – Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June at 3.30pm**

The INDIVIDUAL date and times:

- **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 3.30pm**

Pupils should play from school under the supervision of a teacher.

The total of the top four individual scores in each team count as the team score. The top individual scores will count for the individual awards.



# EXPECTATIONS - PUPILS

- Set up a Lichess account\* and join the school Lichess team and IAPS Lichess team.
- It is recommended that pupils play in at least one training tournament. They can do this at home or at school.
- Understand the Fair Play document and abide by it!
- \*Lichess 'Kid mode' must be enabled. Parental consent also required for younger players. Teacher help may be required.



# EXPECTATIONS - TEACHERS



1. Enter your school into the tournament as soon as possible. Schools **MUST** enter by the end of Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January.
2. Create your school team on Lichess using school name, year and section (e.g. “King Charles Prep 25/26 U9”, “Lady Jane Junior 25/26 U13”).
3. Share instructions with your team members on how to set up a Lichess account, paying attention to online safety settings.
4. Invite your players to join your school Lichess team for U9 or U13.
5. Share your School Lichess team name with IAPS.
6. Support players to join the IAPS Lichess team (this is required in order to play in the training tournaments). Only players should join the IAPS Lichess team, teachers should **NOT** join.
7. Encourage your players to join a training tournament. They can play in the training tournaments at school or at home.
8. Pupils should play in the qualification tournaments and final tournament at school, under the supervision of a teacher.
9. Celebrate success in school and spread the word about IAPS online chess.

In addition, monitor your pupils during the playing sessions and provide opportunities for your pupils to practice either face to face or online!

# ONLINE SAFETY

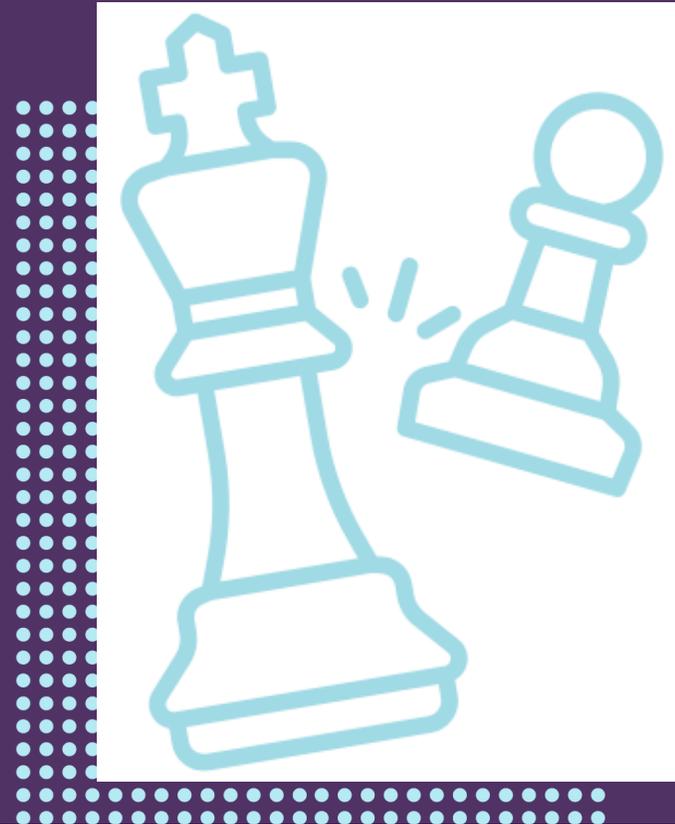
- Tournaments are conducted on Lichess.org.
- Give clear guidance to pupils on setting up usernames – they shouldn't give away personal details such as full name or date of birth. Usernames cannot be changed once set up!
- Pupils accounts must be set to 'kid mode' on Lichess.
- Chat settings are disabled in 'kid mode' on Lichess.
- When you set up your team, ensure you have followed the instructions and ticked the setting to approve who joins your team.
- Please ensure that you DO NOT toggle the switch to hide members of your team. The tournament controllers need to be able to see the members of your team at all times.



# GETTING STARTED

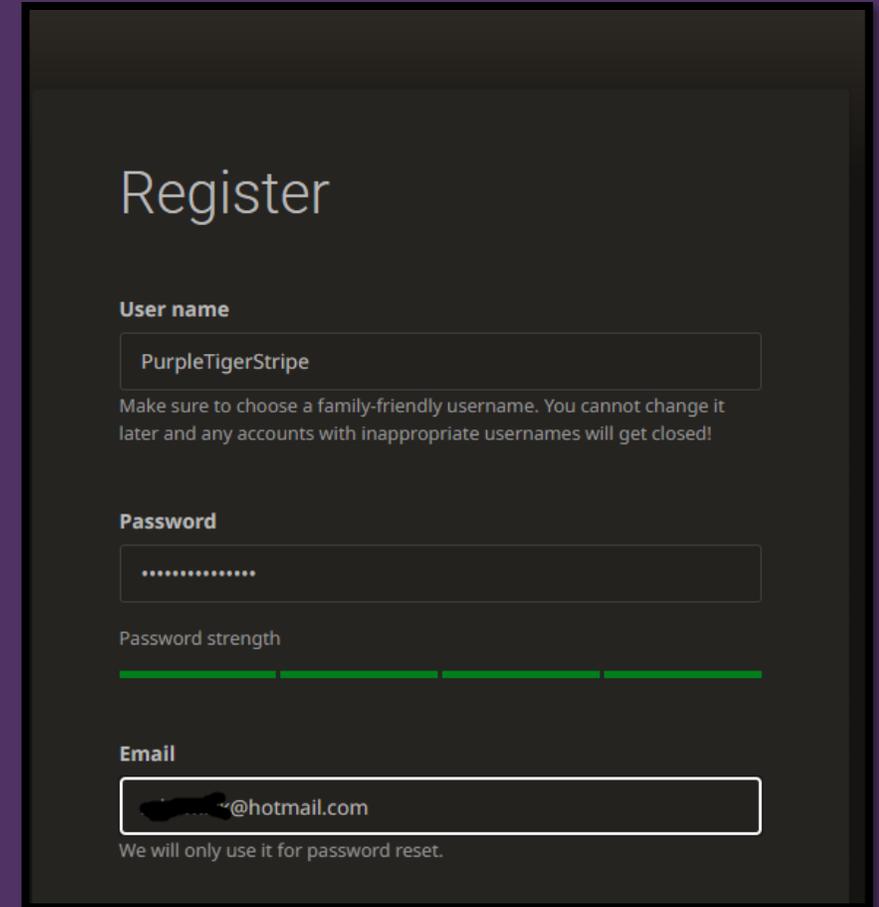
## STEP BY STEP GUIDANCE:

1. Setting up Lichess accounts for teachers and students.
2. Creating a school team on Lichess.
3. Joining a team on Lichess.
4. Joining the IAPS team on Lichess.



# SETTING UP LICHESS ACCOUNTS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

1. Go to <https://lichess.org/login>
2. Click on “Register” at the bottom on the left hand side.
3. Choose a username. **It is best practice to choose a name which does not directly identify you.** For example, do not use full, real names. In the example below I have chosen an anonymous name. Ensure that your choice of name is not controversial in any way. You have a maximum of 20 characters for your username. Do not use non-standard characters, such as @, ~, # and so on.
4. PurpleTigerStripes  
**You cannot change your username later!**
5. Choose a password.
6. Add an email address. Note: Do not set up accounts on behalf of pupils using the same email address for all of them.



The screenshot shows the Lichess registration page. The title is "Register". There are three main sections: "User name", "Password", and "Email".

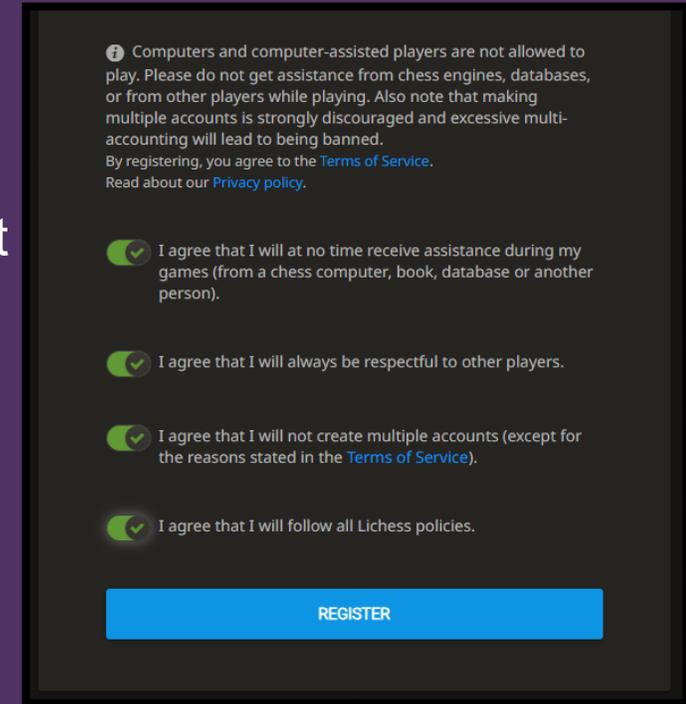
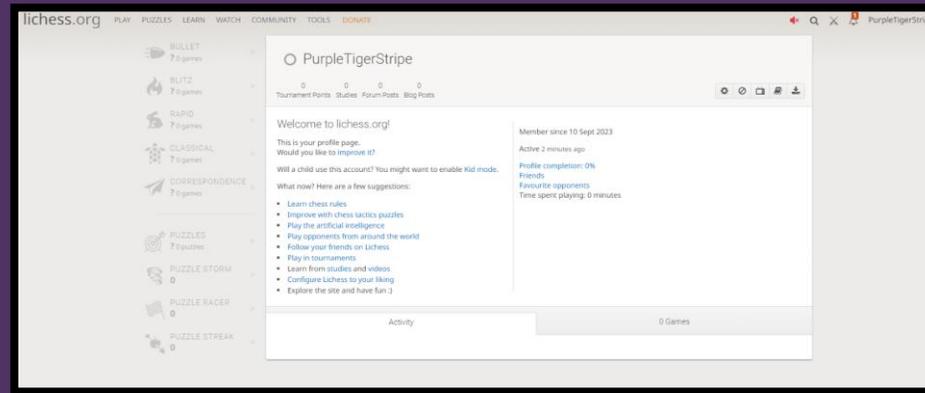
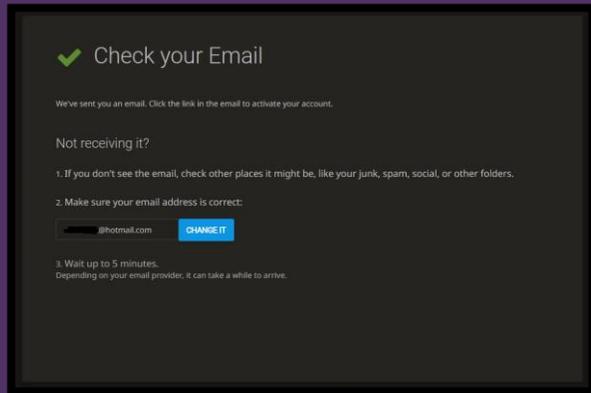
- User name:** The input field contains "PurpleTigerStripe". Below it, a note says: "Make sure to choose a family-friendly username. You cannot change it later and any accounts with inappropriate usernames will get closed!"
- Password:** The input field is filled with dots. Below it, a "Password strength" indicator shows a green progress bar that is nearly full.
- Email:** The input field contains a redacted email address followed by "@hotmail.com". Below it, a note says: "We will only use it for password reset."

# SETTING UP LICHESS ACCOUNTS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS (CONTINUED...)

6. Agree to the Lichess Terms of Service.

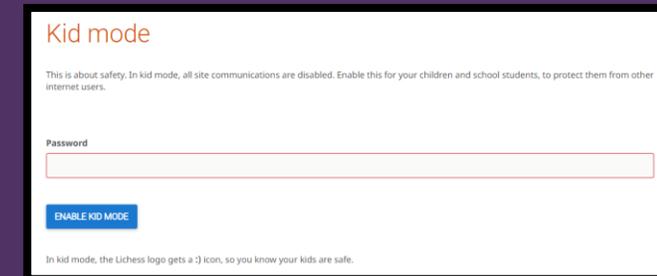
7. Click “Register”

8. Go to your email message and click on the link to activate your account



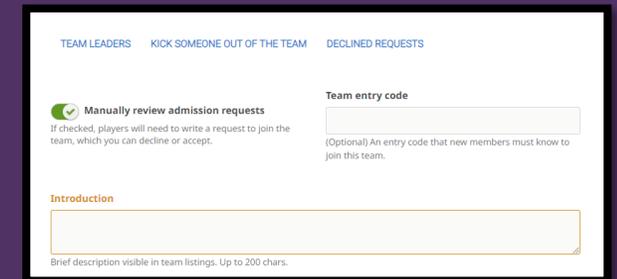
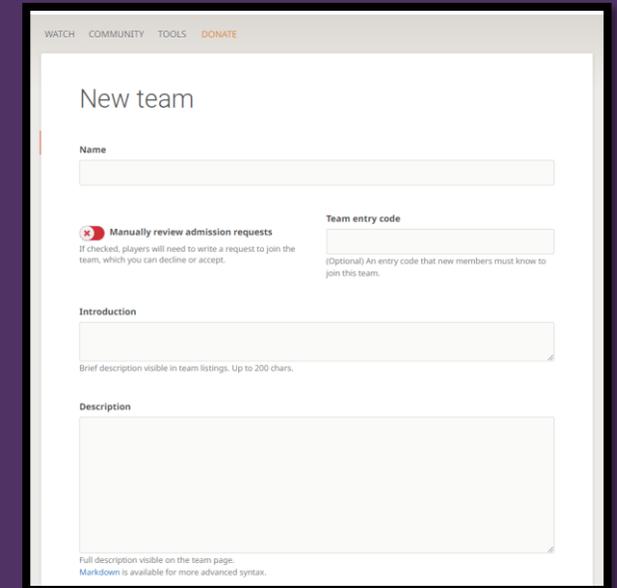
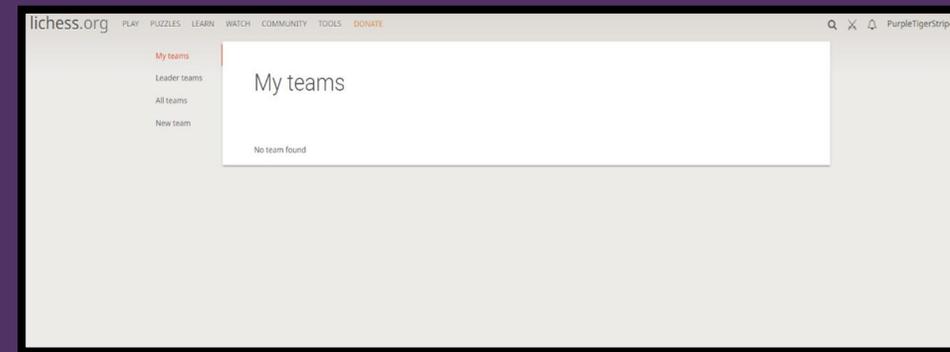
9. For the IAPS Chess tournament, pupil accounts must have “Kid Mode” enabled. This will prevent pupils from receiving chat and direct messages from other users of Lichess. A direct link to this in each user profile is here: <https://lichess.org/account/kid>

10. The Lead Teacher will now need to create a school Team(s) on their Lichess account. One team for each age section you entered.



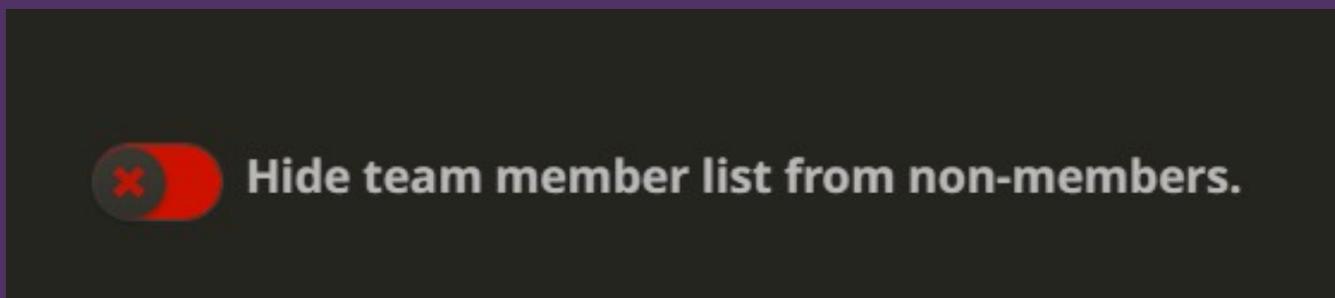
# CREATING YOUR SCHOOL U9 &/OR U13 TEAM

1. Hover over “Community” at the top of the page.
2. Click “Teams” from the list.
3. Click on “New Team” on the left-hand side of the page.
4. Under “Name” fill in the name of your school. This will be your Team name. The names must be recognisable as the name of your school, year and age section. For example, use either your full school name e.g. “King Charles III Prep School 2025/26 U9”, or something similar which still easily identifies your school, year and section. Team security – you should toggle “Manually review admission requests” to ON. This means that pupils can request to join the team but will only be admitted once the Team Leader (the teacher) has reviewed the request and ensured that it is from a member of their school of the correct age. This is mandatory, so that you can prevent other people on Lichess with no connection to your school from joining your team.
5. If you failed to do this when you set the team up, you can go into the Team Settings option, and toggle “Manually review admission requests” to ON. You can also remove anyone who joined your team who shouldn’t have been able to in the same place in the “KICK SOMEONE OUT OF THE TEAM” area.



## MAKE SURE YOU DO NOT HIDE TEAM MEMBER LIST FROM NON-MEMBERS

- The IAPS online chess organisers need to be able to see your team member list at all times. It is essential that you toggle this switch to the off position (red). If team member list is hidden, we cannot let your players into the IAPS team where the tournament is played.



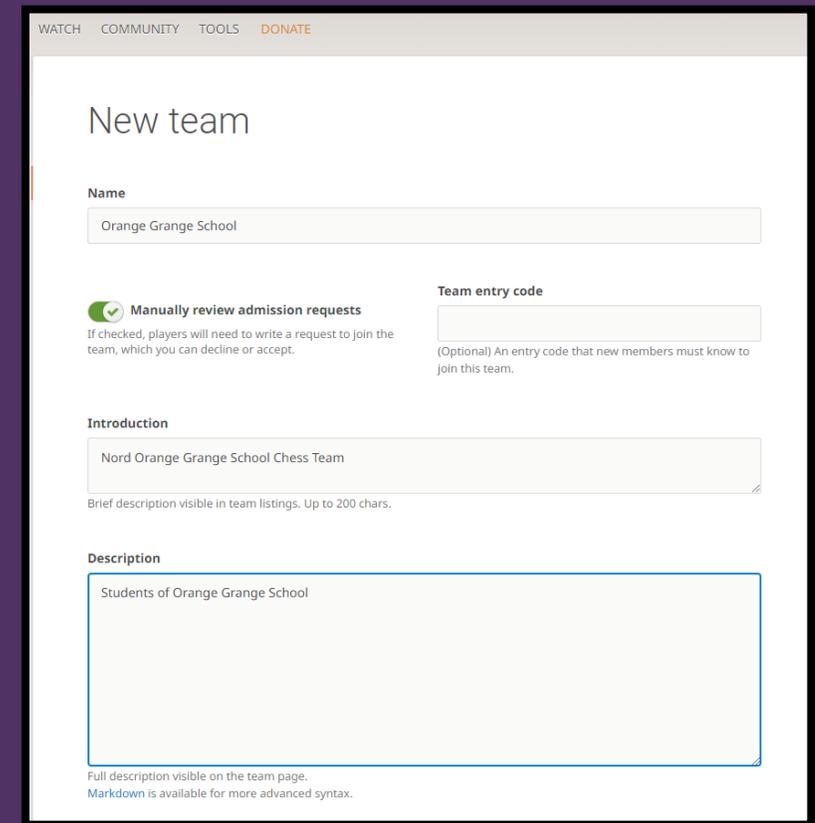
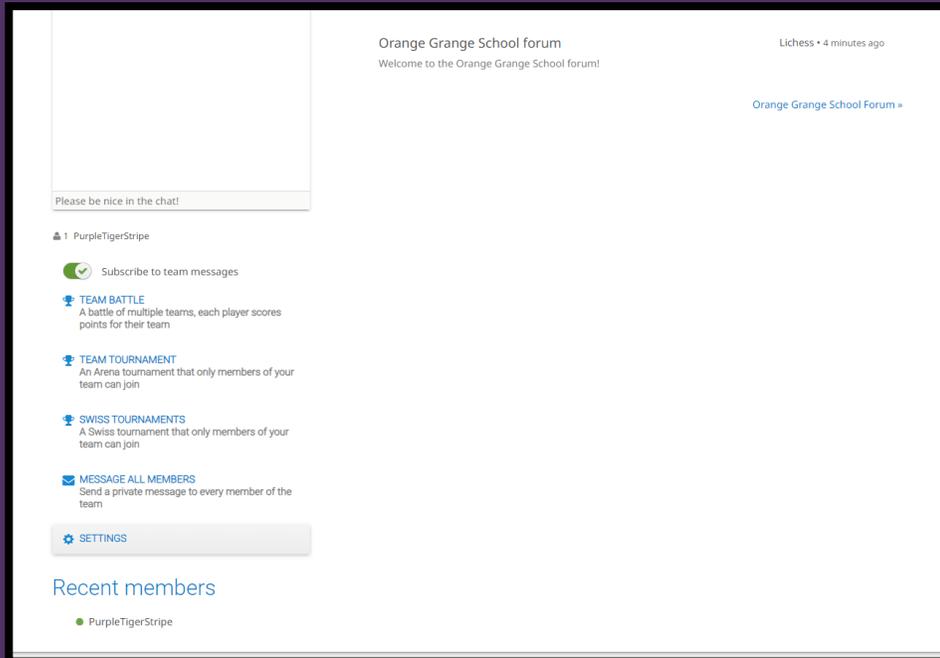
Ensure the toggle is to the off position.

# CREATING YOUR SCHOOL TEAM (CONTINUED...)

6. Fill in the introduction and description as you see fit.

7. Fill in the private description as you see fit.

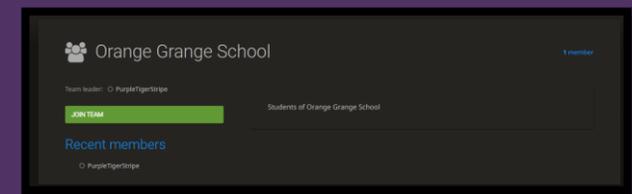
8. Complete the CAPTCHA. You will need to know some simple chess to complete this!



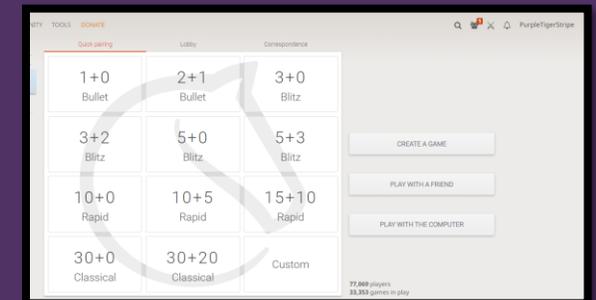
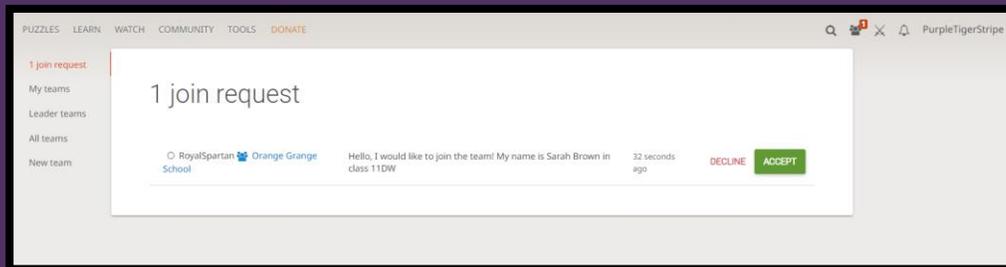
9. Once you have correctly solved your CAPTCHA you will be taken to your Team page.

10. The team in our example is called "Orange Grange School" and has one member now who is the person who created the team, PurpleStripeTiger, who is the Team Leader.

# JOINING A TEAM ON LICHESS



1. Once the Team Leader is logged in and on your school Team page, go to your address bar and copy the URL. For the Orange Grange School Team it is: <https://lichess.org/team/orange-grange-school>
2. Your link will look similar but with YOUR Team name.
3. Send your Team page link to any pupils in your school who qualify and are interested in joining your school Lichess team.
4. The pupil will need to be a member of Lichess and logged into their account. If they then click on the Team link which you have provided, they will be able to join your team.
5. They will get a message that their request to join the team is being reviewed by the team leader.
6. You, the Team Leader, will get an alert on your account asking you if you would like to accept this person into your team. In the example below you can see a red “1” towards the top right of the page telling you that there is one unread message.
7. Click on the message and you will see that you have a join request which you can accept or decline.



## JOINING THE IAPS TEAM

1. All pupils who join your Lichess School Team will also need to join the IAPS Team on Lichess. Players must join your school Lichess team FIRST. Once you have logged in, here is the link which should be passed on to all pupils in your team:

<https://lichess.org/team/iaps-20252026>

2. It is crucial for all players to join the IAPS Team for them to be able to play in the training tournaments.

**Teachers should NOT join this team!**

# NEXT STEPS

1. Create your Lichess team
2. Help your team improve their game!
3. Feel free to set up your own practice tournaments on Lichess

## Key dates

- **23<sup>rd</sup> September – Entries open**
- **5<sup>th</sup> March – Training tournaments**
- **12<sup>th</sup> March – Team Qualifier 2 and Individual Championship**
- **11<sup>th</sup> June – Team Final**

# FAQs

## **Q) Is there an upper age limit?**

A) For the U13 tournament players must have been under 13 on 31st August 2025 and therefore be born no earlier than 1st September 2012. For the U9 tournament players must have been under 9 on 31st August 2025 and therefore be born no earlier than 1st September 2016.

## **Q) Is there a lower age limit?**

A) It is expected that players will be in Yr3 or above when they play in the competition, although, at the discretion of the school, younger children with chess experience may participate.

## **Q) Where are the games played?**

A) The IAPS Online Schools Chess Competition is played on the Lichess website – <http://www.lichess.org>. Pupils may play in the practice tournaments at school or at home. All players in the training tournaments and the final tournament should be playing at school under the supervision of a teacher.

## **Q) How will the tournament be conducted?**

A) The tournament will be conducted as a 'Team Battle' on Lichess. This is a type of 'Arena' tournament where you cannot play other players from your own team.

## **Q) I'm the only chess player in my school - can I still take part?**

A) Yes - there is no minimum team size. You will still need a teacher in your school to register you for the competition and set up a school team though.

# FAQs (CONTINUED...)

## Q) Is there a minimum number of players per team?

A) No - there is no minimum. However, to stand a good chance of winning the team prize, you will need at least 4 players in your team, as it is the top 4 scores for each team that will count. If you have fewer players (or are the only chess player in your school), you can still participate and you will still stand a chance of winning an individual prize.

## Q) Is there a maximum number of players per team?

A) No - an unlimited number of players may play for each school team, but only the top four scores for each team will count.

## Q) How long will the tournament take?

A) The duration of the battle will be 60 minutes and only games that finish within this time will count.

## Q) How long is each game within the battle?

A) The time limit for each game is five minutes plus three seconds per move.

## Q) What happens if I have a problem logging in?

A) If you aren't logged in and ready to play by the time the tournament starts, then unfortunately you will not be able to participate. We strongly recommend players join at least one [training tournament](#) in advance to sort out any technical/access issues. Your teacher can also set up as many practice tournaments as they wish for your team.

# FAQs (CONTINUED...)

## Q) How many scores from each battle count?

A) A team's score will be determined by the total of its four highest-scoring players.

## Q) What happens if someone cheats?

A) A player whose account has been flagged by Lichess for using external assistance will not be permitted to participate in the tournament; whether the assistance happened in this competition or in any other games or activity on Lichess. If Lichess grants permission for a "second chance" account on the website, this is not a reversal of their initial fair play decision, and this account will not be permitted to play in this competition. Make sure you have read and understood the 'Fair Play' guidance.

## Q) Do teachers need to rank players in advance and allocate a board number?

A) No - this tournament does not require you to do that. If you have a large chess club with players of varying levels of experience, they can all take part. For each team, the score will be calculated by the total of its four highest-scoring players.

# WE HOPE YOUR STUDENTS WILL WANT TO GET INVOLVED

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or require any assistance.

