

Chess for Social Skills

Chess for social skills is a series of ten one-hour lessons which use the popular game of chess to develop social skills in primary school students from 1st to 6th class. The programme of lessons is best delivered in large groups such as a mainstream classroom. As the progressive series of lessons builds the knowledge and ability of students to understand and play the game of chess, the lessons also structure discussion and exploration of concepts listed below. Rather than imposing the skills into the game, instead the game has been examined by an experienced primary school teacher as to the skills it develops and the social skills the game develops naturally.

What are Social Skills?

Social skills are the skills we use to interact with one another both verbally and non-verbally through gestures, body language and personal appearance.

- Eye contact
- Turn taking
- Sharing
- Identifying emotions (Saying how he/she feels)
- Explaining emotions (Saying why he/she feels sad/happy/angry etc.)
- Managing emotions (Acting appropriately despite feeling angry/happy/sad)
- Personal space
- Tone of voice
- Body language and gestures

(Adapted from NCSE document on “Developing Social Skills”: <https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Developing-Social-Skills.pdf>)

Chess for Social Skills Series of Lessons:

1. Respect
2. Accepting Defeat
3. Planning Ahead
4. Etiquette
5. Teamwork
6. Decision-Making
7. Patience
8. Safe & Unsafe
9. Resilience
10. Practice

SPHE Curriculum Learning Objectives achieved:

Strand	Strand Unit	Chess for Social Skills
Myself	Self-Identity	Yes
	Taking Care of My Body	No
	Growing & Changing	No
	Safety & Protection	No
	Making Decisions	Yes
Myself & Others	Relating to Others	Yes
	My friends & other people	Yes
	Myself & my Family	No
Myself & the Wider World	Developing Citizenship	Yes
	Media Education	No

Chess for Social Skills: 1st & 2nd Class SPHE Curriculum

Strand: Myself	Strand Unit: Self-identity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop an appreciation of and talk about personal strengths, abilities and characteristics 	Lesson 7 - Patience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> become more independent and self-reliant 	Lesson - 3 Planning Ahead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express personal opinions and preferences and acknowledge those of others and comment on them 	Lesson 10 - Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise and reflect on choices that are made every day 	Lesson 6 - Decision Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss the factors that may influence personal decisions or choices 	Lesson 8 – Safe & Unsafe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that being involved in decision-making demands more personal responsibility 	Lesson 6 - Decision Making Lesson 7 - Patience

Strand: Myself & Others	Strand Unit: Relating to others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore and practise how to handle conflict without being aggressive 	Lesson 2 – Accepting Defeat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express and record experiences, opinions, feelings and emotions in a variety of ways 	Lesson 4 - Etiquette
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen, hear and respond to what is being said by others 	Lesson 5 - Teamwork
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> distinguish between verbal and non-verbal behaviour and know how they are used in performing social functions 	Lesson 1- Respect Lesson 4 - Etiquette

Strand: Myself & Others	Strand Unit: My friends and other people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> know that bullying is always wrong and what should be done if one is being bullied or sees it happening to someone else 	Lesson 9 - Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise and explore bullying behaviour, who is involved and the effects on different people 	Lesson 9 - Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> know how to treat people with dignity and respect 	Lesson 1 – Respect Lesson 2 – Accepting Defeat

Strand: Myself & the Wider World	Strand Unit: Developing Citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> engage in group activities in the class and learn how to share, co-operate, listen to, work and play together 	Lesson 5 - Teamwork

Chess for Social Skills: 3rd & 4th Class SPHE Curriculum

Strand: Myself	Strand Unit: Self-identity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> become increasingly responsible and autonomous 	Lesson 3 - Planning Ahead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express personal opinions, feelings, thoughts and ideas with growing confidence 	Lesson 10 – Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhance his/her own learning 	Lesson 10 – Practice

Strand: Myself	Strand Unit: Making decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> become aware of and think about choices and decisions that he/she makes every day 	Lesson 6 - Decision Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore and discuss the factors that influence personal decisions and choices and the different levels of thought involved in making a decision 	Lesson 7 – Patience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise and explore the risks and the consequences of making a particular decision 	Lesson 6 - Decision Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learn and begin to devise a simple decision-making strategy 	Lesson 8 – Safe & Unsafe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> make individual and group decisions 	Lesson 8 – Safe & Unsafe

Strand: Myself & Others	Strand Unit: My friends and other people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore and examine ways of dealing with bullying 	Lesson 9 - Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise, discuss and understand bullying 	Lesson 9 - Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> respect and show consideration for the views, beliefs and values of others 	Lesson 7 - Patience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practise and recognise the importance of care and consideration, courtesy and good manners when interacting with others 	Lesson 2 – Accepting Defeat

Strand: Myself & Others	Strand Unit: Relating to others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify and discuss various responses to conflict situations and decide on and practise those that are the most appropriate or acceptable 	Lesson 2 – Accepting Defeat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> give and receive compliments and constructive criticism in different situations 	Lesson 4 – Etiquette
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use language, gestures and other appropriate behaviour to perform social functions 	Lesson 1 – Respect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen carefully and reflectively to others 	Lesson 1 – Respect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise and explore various verbal and non-verbal means of communicating 	Lesson 4 – Etiquette

Strand: Myself & the Wider World	Strand Unit: Developing Citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss and explore the concepts of sharing and co-operating and the ways in which they can be put into practice in an effective manner 	Lesson 5 – Teamwork
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop and practise leadership roles and learn to work together in different group situations 	Lesson 5 – Teamwork
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be aware of the importance of mutual respect and sensitivity to the different values and attitudes held by others 	Lesson 4 – Etiquette

Chess for Social Skills: 5th & 6th Class SPHE Curriculum

Strand: Myself	Strand Unit: Self-identity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> become more independent and autonomous 	Lesson 10 - Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> take increasing personal responsibility for himself/herself 	Lesson 3 - Planning Ahead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhance skills to improve learning 	Lesson 7 – Patience lesson 10 – Practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop further the ability to express personal opinions, thoughts and ideas and listen to, respect, think about and comment critically and constructively on the views of others 	Lesson 4 – Etiquette
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflect on his/her experiences and the reasons for taking different courses of action 	Lesson 3 - Planning Ahead

Strand: Myself	Strand Unit: Making Decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify sources of help in solving problems 	Lesson 8 – Safe and Unsafe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss and practise a simple decision-making strategy 	Lesson 8 – Safe and Unsafe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise that decisions have consequences and that not all people will make the same decisions all the time 	Lesson 6 - Decision Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore and learn to examine critically the factors and levels of thought that influence decisions and choices 	Lesson 7 - Patience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acquire a growing sense of the importance of making informed decisions at many levels and identify some of the decisions he/she has to make 	Lesson 6 - Decision Making

Strand: Myself & Others	Strand Unit: My friends and other people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore and discuss how individuals can deal with being bullied, knowing that others are being bullied and being a bully 	Lesson 9 – Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise, discuss and understand bullying and its effects 	Lesson 9 – Resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practise and recognise the importance of care and consideration, courtesy and good manners with others 	Lesson 2 – Accepting Defeat

Strand: Myself & Others	Strand Unit: Relating to others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore and practise how to handle conflict without being aggressive 	Lesson 2 – Accepting Defeat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> begin to appreciate the importance of maintaining a personal stance while also respecting the beliefs, values and opinions of others 	Lesson 4 – Etiquette
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen actively to others and respect what each person has to say 	Lesson 1 – Respect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore and practise the many verbal and non-verbal ways in which people communicate with each other 	Lesson 1 – Respect

Strand: Myself & the wider world	Strand Unit: Developing citizenship
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> practise ways of working together and of developing a sense of belonging 	Lesson 5 – Teamwork
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore the concept of the class or school as a community 	Lesson 5 – Teamwork