

YOUTH BRIDGE IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Vision (V6) – Key Points

1. Sunday morning will continue during the next three school terms. The sessions will focus on assisted play but with pockets of more directed learning.
2. Our main attempt at bringing on new players will be half day (probably 1000-1300) events held in Senior Schools on Inset Days or Activity Days, or held in CBC during school holidays.
3. We will continue with bridge sessions at a limited number of schools, at which the aim will be to build enthusiasm for playing; our target will be that such groups become self sustaining (ie can play without us, whenever they want to) and to seek Sunday attendees.
4. To provide more robust learning, we will develop a clear curriculum for all three series of events, and we will try to arrange that the volunteer help can sign up to groups of sessions in order to give the participants a better sense of continuity.

Vision (V5) – More Details : Schools Bridge Games

5. Our target is the GYB club running at CBC, and we see schools activity as a feeder for that. So schools activity will focus on building enthusiasm, more than on teaching bridge skills. To give the maximum number of schools the opportunity, we will have to limit the amount of time we put into any one school.
6. To persuade schools to get involved we need to point out to the school management the benefits found from playing bridge (improvements in counting, attention, strategy, partnerships etc) but we also need to offer to the pupils these incentives -
 - a. the building of a Gloucestershire Youth Bridge team (or possibly more than one, depending on the age ranges we attract),
 - b. the prospect of a visit to the House of Lords to play for a group sufficiently competent, in March 2019,
 - c. the prospect of inter-school matches we will arrange in June 2019.
7. The key to getting Junior School pupils interested is that they see the fun in playing cards and we can only do this with hands-on sessions for these people. So our Junior School activity must be based around a series of sessions in the school where a group learns something about MiniBridge, and experiences the fun of playing in a group, with playing at the GYB sessions as the next natural step. Because of the manpower costs, we will limit ourselves to two Junior Schools at any one time.
8. Running multiple sessions over one or more terms at a Senior School is more difficult to timetable (squeeze in), attendance is likely to be less consistent, and sessions will always seem too short. We will be willing to do these on request (continuing at Balcarras) but will not promote these as a primary investment of our helpers' time.
9. For any new group, we need to focus first on the mechanics of playing MiniBridge and that will take a good 3+hours, and only then might we move into bridge skills. The first key aim for any group is that the pupils (want to and) can play Minibridge by themselves when we have finished, at which point some will be keen enough to come to GYB Sundays, and that these people will help the others to continue playing at school without our help.

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10. For any School (but more so for Senior Schools) we also need to give them the context of the full game, with the explanation of how Bidding is used to set the trick target. There is a minimum need also – beyond the mechanics - of how to collect more tricks (promoting, finessing, etc) and they need that quite early. To allow them to be competitive amongst themselves, they also need some sense of scoring, so that too needs explained.
11. Our ideal for a school will therefore have three stages to it. Firstly we do a talk explaining the game and its context, and inviting anyone interested to come to, or stay for, a play session. At a series of play sessions (perhaps a half term, perhaps a whole term) we will run a “bridge club” which involved 5-10 minutes of instruction (on the mechanics) and then the playing of hands. The third stage will be when we let them play by themselves, sometimes providing boards for them to play and allowing free dealing also.
12. To go into a school and sell the concept (probably a 10-20 minute show & tell either at lunch time or after school or both) we need to have our marketing material well developed. We need to show that the game is interesting and it is fun, and we need to give enough of a demonstration that people have some idea what they are letting themselves in for. We have a set of material but it needs to develop and improve. The show & tell could include a talk, giving out packs of cards to try, demonstration of one foursome playing, and/or a video of bridge being played (YouTube videos by Max Chauvet are candidates).
13. For the sessions which we staff, the ideal is one helper per table, and someone to lead on the instruction. Continuity is positively helpful and we should aim for helpers to sign up for a series at a school and not for individual sessions. The instruction needs to be limited to one or two points per session, and will need to be re-enforced by posters and possibly handouts.
14. The third stage comes when we leave the club to play without our presence. We need some of the pupils at this point to be coming to Sunday Mornings, at which their learning will vastly speed up, and they will be able to transmit some of that back to the others. Ideally, we should leave the classroom with a “bridge corner” where we can hang some posters either about technique or just bridge news to keep interest going.

Vision (V5) – More Details : Learning MiniBridge

15. In whichever context we teach MiniBridge, we need to have a defined sequence of learning points, which we will flesh out with hand-on card play and other activities. This will ensure we cover the relevant concepts and that we can seamlessly switch teachers when necessary.
16. The stages we will adopt are (which could be over several weeks, or all in the same day)
 - a. Understanding the pack of cards, what constitutes a trick and how to count tricks, rules for following suit, and the sense of partnership in taking tricks.
 - b. The fact of the dummy giving declarer (and the defence) a new perspective, and that the defenders have to cooperate with only the play of the cards to guide them.
 - c. Setting a trick target to give both sides a chance, and counting HCP to determine the trick target from the chart.
 - d. Scoring and how the declaring set chooses a trick target (plus the fact of how the auction will eventually set this).
 - e. Trump contracts, and how trumps can make small cards into winners.
 - f. Duplicate bridge and how it evens out the luck.

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17. The time it takes for hands-on play makes it difficult to play out 13 cards and remember what happened and learn from it, so we will play boards with only 6 cards in each slot, until confidence and speed builds up. It is much quicker to play any side suit or irrelevant suits if it's just cashing an AKQ, so hands with a potential to make all the tricks are better learning vehicles than hands which share out the winners.
18. Scoring generates positive interest in the outcome and so scoring, and scorecards, will be introduced early, and we will encourage the maintenance of a scorecard across sessions. Scoring will be based – in turn, as learning develops, on
 - a. The number of tricks collected.
 - b. Success or failure against the trick target.
 - c. The bridge score that goes with the trick target.
19. Full day sessions at a school will similarly start with MiniBridge.

Vision (V5) – More Details : Full Day Sessions

20. There are two thrusts beyond the mechanics of MiniBridge that we must tackle. These are (a) productive play of the cards, and (b) bidding. We might advertise the sessions as “learning bridge” but it will be impossible for even fast learners to pick up in 5-6 hours what most adults take 30 weeks to cover.
21. These sessions need to maintain energy levels throughout and therefore must have a mix of different styles of activity – in particular we must include listening, watching (videos), doing and eating.
22. We need to build the agenda for these days, and practice delivering on that agenda.
23. This approach – learning in a day – is the only way forward across the breadth of the county, as most of the bridge players and most of our helpers are centred on Cheltenham. We shall offer full day sessions to all Cheltenham Senior Schools and will expand outside Cheltenham the year after.
24. We must understand that not every venture will be successful – but if we average 2 newcomers to GYB per session we will be seriously exceeding anyone's expectations. Some sessions will produce none, and our ability to run sessions will surely improve over time, so initial expectations should not be high.

Vision (V5) – More Details : Bridge Skills

25. We will have two learning themes – one around card play and the other around bidding.
 - a. For cardplay we have the EBED MiniBridge teaching hands as one path (and we have dipped in and out of it over the past year) but others are on offer. We will sit down and plan 5 lessons based on card play for use as the basic plan when introducing bridge to a Junior School. We will sit down and plan 15 lessons based on card play for use on Sunday mornings.
 - b. For bidding, there are multiple sources including Patrick's set of 8 lessons. We will sit down and plan 15 lessons based on bidding for use on Sunday mornings. We will use these on Sundays only with the older participants, and use ad hoc advice on current hands as the primary mode of learning bidding for the younger ones.
26. It is important that pupils have the chance to progress and learn more between sessions. We shall therefore make visible www.nofearbridge.com for learning. We need to build into our learning the ways in which bridge and bridge hands appear in these contexts.

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27. We will not introduce children to on-line facilities for playing bridge but will bring the options to the attentions of the parents through an Information Sheet explaining the possibilities offered by Bridgebase and by Funbridge.

Vision (V5) – More Details : Sunday GYB Sessions

28. We will continue to run 1030-1230 on Sunday mornings during term time, and will be happy to accept attendees with any level of skill. We will make a charge for the game, £5 per head, to include refreshments, and make the point that all moneys go to the equipment and room hire for GYB. All Sundays during term, which means ...

- a. From Sunday 9 Sep to Sunday 14 October, inclusive (6 sessions).
- b. From Sunday 4 November to Sunday 16 December, inclusive (7 sessions).
- c. From Sunday 13 January to Sunday 10 February, inclusive (5 sessions).
- d. From Sunday 3 March to Sunday 31 March, inclusive (5 sessions).
- e. Sunday 21 April and from Sunday 5 May to Sunday 19 May (4 sessions).
- f. From Sunday 9 June to Sunday 14 July, inclusive (6 sessions).

29. Where we have groups of different age or level, we will work with them separately for part of the session, but as often as we can we will finish the session by bringing them together for some joint play. In each group there will be a teaching element, marshalled by the agreed group leader, and a play element, where the group leader will have support of sufficient bridge players to populate the table and offer advice to those who need it.

30. The website will maintain the definitive messages on Sundays dates and any cancellations.

31. We shall continue to use the EBU Junior Award scheme as our basic method of recognising and rewarding success, but as we plan the curriculum, we insert smaller steps which can be celebrated as we proceed. We shall aim to achieve a Junior Award scheme stage for each player each year.

32. We will aim to register all regular students as members of the EBU, and we will encourage them to become members of Cheltenham BC.

33. For GYB Sundays, there will be a stronger emphasis on learning, but it must still be gentle. The learning sequence will be more tailored to the group present. Each session will be planned fully in advance (but those present can deviate as they see appropriate) and will need to include

- a. Some teaching (one or two concepts).
- b. Some playing with cards in ones hand.
- c. Some paper exercises and some screen exercises.
- d. Some video presentation.
- e. A handout summarising the learning points, with a homework quiz to do as reinforcement.
- f. Something different (but not necessarily the last item).

Advertising

- As well as catching children through schools there are two other sources of players – relatives or friends of existing club members, and through advertising locally. In both cases the advertising is not directed at the children, but at carers who might encourage the children to come.

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- We will campaign at CBC for members to bring someone along for the half-term full-day sessions.
- We will try paid-for Facebook adverts in the same timeframe, targeting Facebook accounts which are declared to be local to Cheltenham and which are identified as “parent”. We will arrange a maximum spend of £5 per day and a maximum spend overall of £60 on this. Facebook advertising works by linking users to our GYB Facebook page – it is important therefore that we have the right messages installed there about the “learn in a day” sessions.
- We will also use Radio Gloucestershire and its What-On service to advertise the CBC events.
- The www.bridgewebs.cocm/gloucestershiroyouth website will remain our primary repository of reference information.

Safeguarding

- We will adopt the developing CBC Safeguarding Policy and share in its future development. This builds on and incorporates the EBU’s Youth Care and Safety Policy and Guide. We shall appoint a County/Club Child Protection Office (CPO) who will oversee all aspects of Safeguarding.
- All volunteers in our Youth Bridge activities will be briefed on the Safeguarding Policy and will annually sign to confirm that they have reminded themselves of the Code of Conduct. This includes family members coming to assist. We will ask regular volunteers to become DBS-checked and we will track who is DBS-cleared and ensure that we will always have some DBS-cleared people present in every room.
- As indicate in the Policy, we shall provide monitoring and supervision to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct. All volunteers will be required to watch for, and to report (at least to the CPO and for some, externally) any suspicions or behaviours which conflict with the Code.

Health & Safety

- We will rely on the Risk Assessment being carried out for CBC, which is being updated to reflect issues arising from the presence of children. We will ensure that at least one adult present has an up-to-date First Aid qualification, and we shall take steps to ensure that we have a sufficient pool of such people available.
- We will provide processes and forms for reporting any accidents or near-misses. During sessions we will always have available on notice boards (a) instructions for the players if any foreseeable eventuality, and (b) instructions for the helpers in the case of any foreseeable eventuality. This will include reporting procedures whenever these might be required.
- There will be no drugs taking, no smoking, and no consumption of alcohol on the premises during any Youth Bridge event. There will be no photography unless agreed with the organizers, and all attendees (or their carers) will have been given the chance to avoid any photographs.
- We will not engage in management of medication during Youth Bridge sessions, requiring that the appropriate parent remains in the building if this is to be required.

Before any under-18 (?) person is left at a Youth Bridge session we will require that both the person and the carer have signed the Behaviours and Responsibilities form, and that