

# Cheltenham Bridge Club - Context



- The teaching programme was revamped in 2015-16 with new curriculum model and teaching team
- 2015 – 2020 numbers approx. 100 learners per year (2 groups of year 1, 2 groups of year 2 learners and 2 weekend groups)
- Numbers per group – max of 20 per group. Weekend – max of 12 learners
- Post pandemic numbers 2022/23 53 learners (1 x yr 1 group, 2 x yr 2 groups, 1 weekend group)

# 1. A Clear Pathway

- Clear communication, from the first enquiry email to the time they can play confidently
- Always respond quickly, positively, ring if necessary
- Make the pathway clear to motivate and engage – there is a purpose to learning bridge!
- Offer follow on to lessons e.g. a weekly practice session, Consolidation Day, Learners' Duplicate
- The club offers 3 Gentle Bridge sessions a week – encourage year 2 learners to attend and ensure a warm welcome and a regular BBO Competitive session for learners
- Tweak to Transform – our new series of seminars and Play and Discuss sessions for more experienced members (typically learners from 4-6 years ago) – keep learning ongoing and fresh
- Follow up support for all our learners whether it be F2F, online eg what should I bid on this hand, general club queries/issues



## 2. Curriculum Model

- Two Year Course - 12 x 2 hour lessons per term Two terms a year. OR all yr 1 in two weekends.
- Clear lesson structure where it is **explicit** what is being learnt in the lesson. Keep that in mind throughout and return to at the end of the lesson.
- Range of activities with plenty of practice and a pace to the learning
- Keep content in each lesson to a minimum – one new thing per lesson – decide what is important
- Keep it simple - black and white in the beginning – don't be precious
- Be consistent throughout the whole curriculum model
- Be aware of the ability range – move on those who are able, without isolating those who are struggling – keep it appropriately challenging
- Set homework
- We know there is a lot more to come – don't keep telling them that this will change
- Have a clear pathway where students build on their KSU – review, recap, use previous learning – you are building a story of learning bridge



# 3. The Teaching Team

CBC has 5 teachers and a number of helpers

- It is **not** (necessarily) the best players – teaching skills and aptitude are very important
- Very important to be able to engage and motivate people
- Empathetic, good social skills, being able to listen and respond
- Planning and organisational skills
- Let go of your superior bridge knowledge – keep it simple and doable
- Keep teaching team aligned – consistent about eg signals, points required in situations, leads. Mavericks are not helpful to any teaching team
- A common, shared area for resources eg dropbox



## 4. The Learners

- Many adults are vulnerable learners - however confident they may appear, however senior they were in a previous life
- They often find it harder than anticipated – it is challenging, they don't want to make mistakes, lose face, look stupid, fight/flight responses .....
- Many have lost the knack of learning – our job is to revitalise them
- Some have preconceived ideas from bridge experiences in the dim and distant past
- Keep it light, positive and encourage mistakes – it is okay to get it wrong/ find it hard. Avoid nit picking – pick your feedback points carefully.
- Watch group dynamics and tackle issues – however hard!
- Be strategic and careful in your questioning and support
- Be relaxed yourself and really stress they are here to enjoy learning, feel relaxed and have fun
- Promote the social side of the sessions e.g. coffee breaks, set up WhatsApp group
- Listen to their feedback
- Do not under-estimate how vulnerable many of your learners are

Contact me if you'd like to know more

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