

YEAR 3 & 4 RED COURT COMPETITION

ENGLAND PRIORITY SCHOOL GAMES COMPETITION

This document aims to assist you in running a Year 3 & 4 Red Court Competition, by providing information about the rules, guidance on formats and all other areas associated with the competition.

This document is split into the following areas:

- Aim of the Year 3 & 4 Red Court Competition.
- Overall Competition Structure.
- Roles & Responsibilities.
- Team Composition.
- Tournament Format, Length of Matches & Scoring.
- Young Leaders & Officials.
- Resources.
- Fair Play – The spirit of the games.
- Event Checklist.

Please note that much of the information in this document is for guidance only, and has been designed to allow a deal of flexibility to encourage participation.



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AIM OF THE YEAR 3 & 4 RED COURT COMPETITION

The Year 3 & 4 Red Court Competition is an entry level event, aimed at beginners and players new to the game, rather than an opportunity for advanced players already competing regularly outside of school.

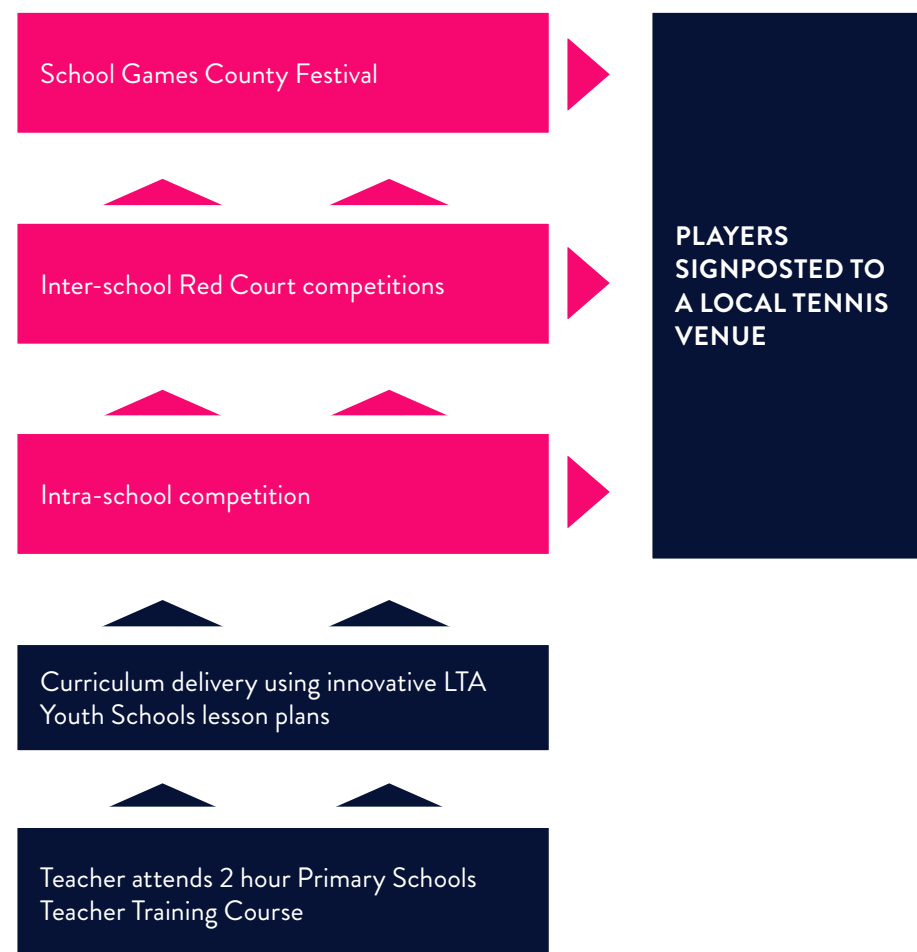
Ideally, entry into the competition should have been preceded by a teacher attending a 2 hour Primary School Teacher Training Course*, who then delivers within the curriculum and/or as part of Out of School Hours Activity. This can then culminate in an intra-school competition and the teacher preparing teams of children to take part in a local inter school Year 3 & 4 competition.

Alternatively, activity could be delivered by a qualified and accredited tennis coach from a local tennis provider that the school has a link with.

*More information, including a promotional video, on the 2 hour Primary School Teacher Training Course is available at: www.lta.org.uk/schools

The LTA welcome the inclusion of independent schools in this event. However, as this may link to a Level 3 School Games County Festival your Local Organising Committee may provide guidance for working with independent schools across all sports.

Flow Chart of Year 3 & 4 Red Court Competition



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OVERALL COMPETITION STRUCTURE

The competition structure has been created to engage with School Games Organisers and the wider school sport network across England, as well as tennis venues who could play a key role in the delivery of competitions.

We hope a county or area's Local Organising Committee (or sub-group there of) will choose to include our Year 3 & 4 Red Court Competition within the School Games County Festival. If not these events should still run on a stand-alone basis.

School Games Organisers, working closely with the local Regional LTA Team and a tennis venue(s) should take overall responsibility for co-ordinating the competition at (inter-school competition) ensuring strong links to the Local Organising Committee.

The structure has been designed so that no one person is over-burdened with running a large amount of events.

The competition works at three stages:

STAGE 1: Cluster Events (where possible)

These events could take place at each Secondary School which acts as a central venue for each cluster primary to compete against each other. These events may involve a one off event or, where interest and capacity allows, even a 3, 4 or 5 week league.

STAGE 2: Cluster Finals

The winners of each Cluster Event then progress through to the Cluster Finals to compete against each other. This event can be run at a local tennis venue and can be co-ordinated by the School Games Organiser, local tennis venue or school sport network staff.

STAGE 3: School Games County Festival

If tennis has been selected as one of the Local Organising Committee's chosen sports then the winners of each Level 2 Final within your County progress through to the School Games County Festival to compete against each other. This event will be run as part of an exciting multi-sport event with around 10 other sports. This event is co-ordinated by the Local Organising Committee working closely with the local Regional LTA Team.

In some instances tennis may not have been selected as one of the Local Organising Committee's chosen sports, if that happens in your county the Year 3 & 4 County Finals should take place on a stand-alone basis. This will be coordinated by the local Regional LTA Team.



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ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

A range of local people and organisations will be able to contribute to the running and coordination of this competition.

The below table is a guide for the headline responsibilities each partner could take on:

RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE
Regional LTA Team	• Overall co-ordination and management of priority local competitions across the County working with local partners. • Co-ordination/delivery of County Finals working with the Local Organising Committee. • Responsibility for tennis specific issues; ensuring exit route information is promoted accordingly and arranging involvement of local tennis providers where appropriate.
School Games Organiser (SGO)	• Co-ordination/delivery of inter school events. • Responsibility for encouraging schools to enter and dealing with entry related administration. • Identify training needs of schools. • Co-ordination/delivery of Cluster Events (where possible).
Tennis Venue	• Support the organisation and delivery of the event. • Host cluster and/or Level 2 Finals events. • Promote programmes and activities to participants so that children can continue playing in a community environment after taking part in the competition.
School Sport Network (e.g. School Sport Partnership (SSP) or Trust/Foundation)	• In many areas a School Sport Partnership or equivalent may be available to support. • If so, their expertise can be used to support the delivery at all levels of the competition.

CASE STUDY

Linking schools competition with a tennis venue in Christchurch, Dorset.

Christchurch Tennis Facility see the link to local schools competitions as a great way to raise the profile of their facility and increase the number of young players on their coaching programmes.

The local LTA Team and local school sport network staff liaise with Christchurch to ensure the right people – such as a coach and/or club volunteer – are well supported and have the resources they need (which are all available in this Toolkit!) to organise and deliver the local cluster competition.

In addition to this the local secondary school staff are supported by the LTA to train a group of 16-18 year olds as Competition Organisers – these young people not only support the local schools competition but feed into the club programme throughout the summer giving the young people valuable experience as well as providing Christchurch with some enthusiastic and committed volunteers.

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TEAM COMPOSITION

- Obviously it depends on your team entry, the amount of matches and the format used, but it is recommended that you allow 2-3 hours for each event.
- The suggested team composition is 4 players, 2 boys and 2 girls and schools are encouraged to enter more than 1 team, capacity permitting.
- Alternatively, should it be jointly agreed locally, a larger team approach can be taken – with teams of 6 or 8.
- By entering more than 1 team or creating larger teams – schools are helping to grow the depth of competition.
- Players should be from Year 3 and/or Year 4 – i.e. a mixture of the two Year Groups can be used, or teams can be from just one Year Group.
- This competition is an entry level event, aimed at beginners and players new to the game, rather than an opportunity for advanced players already competing regularly outside of school.

Please take the above into account when inviting schools to enter the event. To assist in ensuring the appropriate standard of players are participating, you may wish to decide with your local Regional LTA Team to implement a County-wide entry restriction using 'Mini Tennis Ratings' as a guide. LTA staff can provide more advice on this.

TOURNAMENT FORMAT, LENGTH OF MATCHES AND SCORING

A 'Round Robin Box' format is the most appropriate and popular way of organising a Schools Competition. For example if you have 8 teams competing, you could separate the teams as follows:

Blue Group	Team A	Team B	Team C	Team D
Team A				
Team B				
Team C				
Team D				

Matches:

A v B C v D
A v C D v B
A v D B v C

Red Group	Team A	Team B	Team C	Team D
Team A				
Team B				
Team C				
Team D				

Matches:

A v B C v D
A v C D v B
A v D B v C

As teams are made up of 4 players, each match between two schools consists of 4 separate rubbers:

Boy 1 v Boy 1 Singles

Boy 2 v Boy 2 Singles

Girl 1 v Girl 1 Singles

Girl 2 v Girl 2 Singles

- Each 'match' is set off to play and the final score entered onto the 'Mini Tennis Match Card' and then the 'Round Robin Box Sheet' would either be; 4-0, 3-1, or 2-2 – taking into account the individual results from each of the 4 rubbers.
- These scores then add up to give a total points score for each team. Individual match points can also be tallied in case of a tie.
- Some Counties may wish to run doubles as well as singles matches, as described above.
- 'Round Robin Box Sheets', 'Order of Play Guidance', 'Match Cards' and 'Example Timings and Format for Competition' can be found in the 'Resources' section of this toolkit. See below for more guidance in terms of timings/format for your event.
- It also helps to provide each player with a 'Player Label' – stating which Group they are in (i.e. Red or Blue) and which player they are (i.e. Boy 1) – a template for player labels can be found in the 'Resources' section of this toolkit.
- Mini Tennis scoring does not use traditional tennis scoring (15, 30, 40 etc.). Instead, simple numbered scoring is used, i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.

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TOURNAMENT FORMAT

Several scoring options can be adopted for competitions:

1. 'Timed'

- Players play for a set period of time, until the whistle blows. The length of matches depends on time available and amount of entries.
- Obviously it depends on your team entry, the amount of matches and the format used, but it is recommended that you allow 2-3 hours for each event.

Timed matches are strongly recommended for schools competition. You can plan exactly how long matches will last and therefore, the overall time your competition will take.

There are a range of example timings and formats for Competition in the 'Resources' section of this toolkit. They are set up for events lasting 2 or 3 hours and for between 4 and 8 teams entering, although you can adapt them to suit your specific needs.

An alternative scoring option is outlined to the right – the disadvantage of this is that matches start and finish at different times and it is difficult to plan the overall time needed.

2. 'First to 10'

- This is called a Match Tie Break. A benefit of this option is that it is most realistic to a real match situation.
- On average, a Match Tie Break (with 1 or 2 point clear gap) takes 10 minutes to play.

COURT SIZE

- Red courts are played on badminton-sized courts.
- The easiest option is to use badminton courts; however, you can also set up Red Tennis courts on standard tennis courts, both inside and out.
- More information and guidance on the options for setting up Red courts can be found in the 'Resources' section of this toolkit.

PLAYING

- The serve is decided by a 'toss' at the start of the match.
- The nominated person serves for the first point, it then alternates every 2 points.
- When serving, players should stand behind the baseline.
- When serving, the ball must not be bounced before being hit.
- The serve can be hit over or under arm.
- Serves should be hit diagonally, landing in the diagonally opposite service box.
- Each court should have a helper/scorer, who calls out the scores and helps out with decisions (this is a great opportunity to use Tennis Leaders).
- Sponge balls should be used if playing indoors, felt Red Balls should be used if playing outdoors.
- Rackets no longer than 23" in length should be used.



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YOUNG LEADERS & OFFICIALS

These events are great opportunities to involve Young Volunteers to assist. The LTA offers the Tennis Leaders Course to train Young Volunteers:

TENNIS LEADERS

- Tennis Leaders is targeted at 13+ year olds with an interest in tennis.
- Tennis Leaders aims to encourage more young people to get involved and signposts volunteers to off-court tennis activities as well as giving them the skills to volunteer on-court.
- Tennis Leaders includes a 'Schools/Community' module and can be delivered by any qualified and active teacher without the need to go on any specific training.

There are currently 5 modules in the Tennis Leaders Award:

Core module (3 hours).

- Introduction to Tennis.

Additional modules (2 hours each).

- Volunteering at your tennis venue.
- Leading a practice session.
- Helping at your school.
- Helping at a competition.

Find out more about Tennis Leaders at: <https://www.lta.org.uk/workforce-venues/coach-teach/programme-development/becoming-a-tennis-leader/>



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RESOURCES

This toolkit contains all the resources and templates you require to run your events. You should photocopy the required amount of signs, forms and templates for your event in advance and bring with you on the day.

In addition, you are likely to require the following items to run your event:

- Red Balls. Sponge ball for indoor use and red felt ball for outdoor use (minimum 4 per court).
- Spare rackets (17" – 23").
- Notice Board.
- Pens/Pencils.
- Clip Boards.
- Marker Pens.
- Blue Tac.
- Whistle or hooter.
- First Aid Kit.

MISCELLANEOUS

It is recommended that you set up a Registration Desk, where teams should register and all scores are recorded at.

It is also a good idea to display the Round Robin Box Sheets on a notice board by the desk, to reduce the amount of people asking for the scores at regular intervals!



In the first instance, if you require more advice or support, you should contact the person co-ordinating the Schools Tennis Competitions within your area – likely to be your School Games Organiser or local school sport network.

All resources linked to this guidance can be found online at: www.lta.org.uk/schools



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FAIR PLAY – THE SPIRIT OF THE GAMES

It can work well to give out ‘On-The-Spot’ points for ‘Good Sportsmanship’, ‘Best Shot’, or ‘Fantastic Rallies’.

These would be added onto the overall score sheet, not the individual matches – this enables all players to contribute to the overall score.

You may want to link these additional rewards to the School Games values: Honesty, Respect, Passion, Determination, Teamwork and Self Belief.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Q: How can we offer Year 3 & 4 pupils of a higher ability, or who are already regularly competing, an opportunity to represent their school?

A: This is a challenge in a lot of Counties where improving or talented young tennis players are keen to represent their school. Some Counties – where capacity and time allows – overcome this by running Orange Court events alongside their priority Red Court competitions.

Q: Some schools tell us it is a challenge for them to participate with only four players in a team?

A: The simplest way to overcome this is to invite schools to send more than one team. However, where this isn't practical some Counties run Festivals alongside their Red Court competition so schools are able to bring along a whole class. Alternatively, you could make the teams sizes bigger –

but this needs be agreed locally across the County.

Q: We have some concerns about including independent schools within this competition?

A: The LTA welcome the inclusion of independent schools in this event, as long as the appropriate standard of players are entered, in accordance with the aim of the event – i.e. all players beginners or new to the game, rather than an opportunity for advanced players already competing regularly outside of school.



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EVENT CHECKLIST

Please note that the planning section below is based upon the events running to the following timescales:

Spring and Summer Terms

Curriculum delivery and intra-school competitions take place.

April – June

Inter school events take place.*

June – July

County Festival takes place.*

If agreed at County level, there is flexibility for these headline dates to change slightly.*

The suggested timescales are specifically for the competitions and don't state options for wider tennis activity, such as curriculum-time coaching, teacher training and lead-in programmes in general – although these should always be built in to the overall programme.

* Guidance or templates are available in the 'Resources' section of this toolkit.



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EVENT CHECKLIST

ONE WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT:

TICK HERE:

Place teams/players into Round Robin Boxes accordingly.*

Prepare the Order of Play; use the Order of Play Guidance and Round Robin Boxes.*

Photocopy Scorecards.*

Print out Court Number Signs, Registration Desk Sign and Directional Arrows.*

Print out and prepare 'Welcome Notice'.*

Print out Player Labels.*

Arrange equipment (balls and spare rackets).

Double check and confirm venue booking.

Double check and confirm assistants/young leaders.

Prepare a useful event pack – pens, blu-tac, paper, clip boards, first aid kit etc.

Print out blank Orders of Play in case of last minute changes.*

* Guidance or templates are available in the 'Resources' section of this toolkit.



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EVENT CHECKLIST

AT THE EVENT:

TICK HERE:

Set up Registration Desk and Noticeboard.*

Put up Court Number Signs.*

Put up Directional Arrows guiding teams to the venue.*

Set up courts and nets.

Set out equipment (balls and spare rackets).

Complete Risk Assessment.*

Brief assistants/leaders.

Welcome arriving teams and ask to complete sign-in sheets.*

Conduct a simple introduction to the staff and leaders involved, provide an overview of the format/rules etc.

Conduct a simple warm-up activity.

Commence matches as per your order of play, including any necessary play-offs.*

Conduct a short presentation, congratulating all teams involved, thank teachers, leaders, parents etc. and distribute certificates and any other prizes.*

Distribute information on local places to play tennis.*

Where relevant, invite the team to the County Final.*

* Guidance or templates are available in the 'Resources' section of this toolkit.



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EVENT CHECKLIST

AFTER THE EVENT:

TICK HERE:

Send results/relevant paperwork to the relevant co-ordinator.

Celebrate and promote your success.

Where appropriate, invite winning team(s) through to the next round of the event.*

Consider sending a press release to the local media.*

* Guidance or templates are available in the 'Resources' section of this toolkit.

