



Chess Mate Foundation

Activity & Impact Report, Sep 2026

Teaching children to think, plan, and persevere, one chess move at a time

Chess Mate Foundation uses chess to build the thinking skills of underprivileged, orphaned, and physically challenged children across Bharat, and measures the difference it makes.

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32

STUDENTS IN OUR
FIRST PILOT,
CLASSES 5 TO 12

02

GROUPS OF 16, BOYS
AND GIRLS
TOGETHER

Sundays

10 AM TO 12 NOON AT
MANAV MANDIR
GURUKUL, DELHI

6 months

OF TRACKED
LEARNING, WITH
BASELINE AND
END-LINE TESTS

Why we exist

Many children in orphanages, low-income families, and specially abled communities never get a structured chance to build the skills that help them learn, decide, and grow. It is not only a lack of schooling. Nobody is systematically developing or measuring how well these children think.

Chess Mate Foundation was founded to change that. Every child deserves the chance to build focus, critical thinking, and confidence, whatever their background or physical ability.

Why chess?

Chess turns thinking into practice. Regular, structured play helps children build:

- Critical thinking
- Problem-solving
- Concentration and memory
- Planning and decisions
- Emotional resilience
- Self-discipline

We turn these known benefits into outcomes we can measure, using a structured learning framework rather than casual play.

What we achieved, May to September 2026

1. Foundation registered. Legal formalities completed (Registration No. IV-190100951/2026).
2. Trainers secured. We partnered with 24 Chess Delhi to provide qualified chess trainers.
3. Partner school home found. We teamed up with Manav Mandir Gurukul, Delhi, and built a Cognitive Skills Assessment Framework for research-linked training of 32 students. Non-clinical psychologists will guide it, with psychology interns involved.
4. Classes began on 27 September 2026. Training started for all 32 students at Manav Mandir Gurukul, Sarai Kale Khan, Delhi.



Both groups are practising together during the first sessions.



Our trainer from 24 Chess Delhi leads an interactive lesson on chess basics.



Moves are explained on the demo board, with students learning with curiosity.



Our President explains the programme to Sadhvi Samta Shri Ji.



Students practise and take notes in class.

The programme at Manav Mandir Gurukul

When	Every Sunday, 10 am to 12 noon (from 27 Sep 2026)
Where	Manav Mandir Gurukul, near Sarai Kale Khan, Delhi
Who	32 students, classes 5 to 12, from a Delhi CBSE government school
How	Two groups of 16, each with a 1-hour session

Our trainer teaches through interactive lessons, starting with the basics, and every student takes home practice work.

What the Foundation has provided

- 16 chess boards and 16 chess sets
- 1 demo board and 1 demo set
- 32 Chess Mate caps
- 32 notebooks and 32 pens



Why we measure: a research-led approach

At the heart of our work is a long-term study of how chess training affects children's cognitive development. We are building one of India's first datasets on this question, so educators, researchers and policymakers can design better programmes.

Our aim is not just to teach chess. It is to build thinking, decision-making, planning, and perseverance.

Our pilot: Assessing the Impact of Chess on Cognitive Skill Development among Underprivileged Students

Group	Baseline (before chess)	Midline	End line
32 students	Month 0	Month 3	Month 6

What comes next, October 2026 to March 2027

1. Finalise the baseline assessment questions with the Gurukul's head of department, our non-clinical psychology lead and psychology interns.
2. 11 October 2026: up to two psychology interns visit to run the first short assessment, with prior permission from the Gurukul.
3. Hold quarterly meetings with 24 Chess Delhi, Gurukul teachers, and parents to review progress and plan each child's next steps.
4. Support promising players, and let eligible students take part in chess competitions.
5. By the end of March 2027: publish and share the pilot report, with cognitive skill findings validated by our psychology lead.

How change happens

Our theory of change links what we put in to the difference we want to see.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
People, chess, curriculum, volunteers and research	Chess training, cognitive exercises, mentoring and assessment	Children trained, sessions held, training hours	Better attention, planning, problem-solving, decision-making and perseverance	Greater confidence, learning readiness and future-ready capability

Our hypothesis: regular, structured chess gives children a place to practise concentration, planning, logical reasoning, decision-making and perseverance.

Our vision

We want children facing hardship to gain self-reliance and fair opportunity, narrowing the gender gap and raising social mobility. We also give psychology students real-world research experience, and we will publish our findings so more researchers take up chess and cognitive skills.

Contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 1: No Poverty

Cognitive and life skills that widen future opportunity and social mobility.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

Concentration, emotional resilience and cognitive fitness.

SDG 4: Quality Education

Critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making in inclusive education.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Equal chances for girls and boys to learn, compete and lead.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Employability, strategic thinking and leadership for future careers.

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure

Research-led, data-driven methods built with academia, industry and civil society.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Inclusive access for underprivileged, orphaned, and differently abled children.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

NGOs, schools, researchers and psychologists working together.

Help us give more children a seat at the board

Our first 32 students have started. With your support we can reach more children, keep trainers and assessments going, and share what we learn. To donate, sponsor a group, volunteer or partner with us, please get in touch.

Email helpdesk@chessmate.org.in

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THEME: USING CHESS AS A COGNITIVE COPILOT FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT TO CREATE COGNITIVE CAPITAL FOR BHARAT.