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## ECB, Chance to Shine and Lord's Taverners join forces, taking cricket to hundreds more schools this year

Through inclusive programmes being rolled out by the ECB, Chance to Shine and Lord's Taverners, cricket will be taken directly to those children who are at the greatest risk of missing out on playing the game.

More than 55,000 extra children from underserved communities, and those attending special educational needs and disability schools, are being given the chance to play cricket through targeted investment in schools programmes by the ECB, run in conjunction with Chance to Shine and Lord's

Taverners.

Watch the video here: <https://www.ecb.co.uk/video/29...>

Data shows that just under 1.9 million children in England now receive free school meals, a number which has soared with the impacts of the Pandemic and the cost of living crisis, and there are 1.5 million children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Research also shows that these children are less likely to be active.

### **Targeted delivery of cricket sessions**

Working with the ECB, Chance to Shine expects to advance its cricket delivery in up to 300 more schools where at least 40% of the student population qualifies for free school meals. At the same time, the ECB will grow its partnership with Lord's Taverners with the charity expecting to reach at least 200 extra SEND schools running a cricket programme designed to reach more young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

In total, the expanded programmes represent an additional 26,000 hours of curriculum time cricket activity aimed at connecting communities and improving lives.

These programmes will be completely free of charge, delivered as part of the school day so that no additional transport or parental support is required, and every session will be provided by a qualified coach, alongside all the necessary equipment.

**Clare Connor, interim CEO of the ECB, said:** "Helping everyone to be able to say 'cricket is a game for me' is essential for our sport's continued development and growth. These programmes are fantastic ways to ensure that young people with the least have the opportunity to gain the most through cricket. Schools cricket is vitally important, and we will continue to be an advocate for more cricket in the curriculum in every discussion we have."

Free school meal eligibility has increased by 32% since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, while children with disabilities are more likely to be less active than children without disabilities. The ECB currently invests approximately

£4m per year to support the delivery of school cricket across 7,500 schools and 670,000 children, working with every County Cricket Board across England and Wales. This extra investment will deliver cricket initiatives at a greater rate, scale, and impact than ever before.

**Clare Connor added:** “Just under 1.9 million children in England now receive free school meals and there are 1.5 million children with special educational needs or disabilities. These programmes will be delivered completely free of charge to boys and girls on the school site, so no additional transport or parental support will be required. We want to raise the game to make cricket the most inclusive and accessible sport in England and Wales, with a barrier-free offer in every school – beginning with those most in need. We’re delighted to be able to roll out these initiatives and we look forward to seeing their impact in 2023.”

### **ECB’s charity partners**

Chance to Shine is a UK based cricket charity that works in state schools and communities across England, Wales, and Scotland. It aims to give all children the opportunity to play, learn, and develop through cricket.

Lord’s Taverners aims to empower and positively impact the lives of young people facing the challenges of inequality. Through high-quality cricket programmes, it helps young people make positive choices, improve their health and wellbeing, and achieve positive outcomes.

**Mark Curtin, chief executive of Lord’s Taverners, said:** “This ground breaking programme will ensure that we can provide inclusive coaching, training for teachers and appropriate equipment in the school setting. We all know the impact that cricket can have not just on physical and mental health and this is a hugely exciting partnership to help us to continue to grow the reach and impact of the sport we all love.”

**Vanessa Greene, interim chief executive of Chance to Shine, said:** “An incredible amount of work has gone in to pinpointing the schools and communities that will most benefit from these programmes. We consistently hear from coaches and teachers that cricket has a wonderful impact on the physical, mental and social development of young people and are excited to bring those benefits to thousands more children moving forward.”

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