

ECB Guidelines for Junior Players in Open Age Group Cricket

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This covers the selection and participation of young players in open age group cricket and aims to help clubs decide when to select young players and how best to help their cricketing development when they play within open age groups. It applies to both girls and boys. These guidelines have been updated for the 2014 season.

General:

- Making the step up from junior to open age group cricket is a significant event in any player's cricket experience. Ensure the player's safety, personal development needs and overall cricket experience are considered
- Clubs, squad coaches and managers must take into account the requirements on age detailed in this guidance
- Each case is to be determined on an individual basis, depending on the player's ability and stage of cognitive and emotional maturity to take part at this level – however, the minimum age guidance must be adhered to
- Juniors should be involved in all aspects of the game wherever possible i.e. socialising, team talks, practice, decision making etc. so they feel part of the team
- Children will often feel more comfortable and able to perform if they have a family member or friend also playing in the team
- Remember, children's early experiences will remain with them always and will often determine whether they want to remain playing the game or give up and do something else
- Provide an opportunity for players to show their talents in an appropriate way. *Children who are just used as fielders will not fully experience the game*
- Be supportive, at all times, for all forms of effort even when children are not successful. Try and put them in situations where they will experience some success (however small) and ensure plenty of praise and encouragement
- The captain should inform the Umpires of under 18s in the side

Restrictions:

ECB Helmets, Fast Bowling Directives and Fielding Regulations should always be adhered to for junior players in open age group cricket (see Safety in Cricket document)

Minimum age:

- U12 boys and girls who are a minimum of 11 years of age on September 1st of the year preceding the season (school year 7) who are county squad or area squad players are eligible to play in open age group cricket
- All other players (District and Club) are not eligible until they reach the U13 age group, are in school year 8 and be at least 12 years old on September 1st of the previous year

Written parental consent is required for both of these groups.

Duty of Care:

In allowing junior players to play in open age cricket, clubs and coaches must recognise the 'duty of care' obligations they have towards these young players:

- Not to place a young player in a position that involves an unreasonable risk to that young player, taking account of the circumstances of the match and the relative skills of the player
- Not to create a situation that places members of the opposing side in a position whereby they cannot play cricket as they would normally do against adult players