

ECB: Guidelines on Safety in Cricket

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The Home of Elworth Cricket Club
on the Internet



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1. Supervising Children at Cricket Sessions

When planning children's cricket, or general, sessions sufficient adults must be present to adequately supervise all participants and manage any incident that may arise.

It is a basic requirement of all sessions and matches involving children that a minimum of two responsible adults will be present in all circumstances.

There are two sets of ratios for working with children

1. Qualified coach ratios required for coaching sessions

- Net coaching 1 coach : 8 children
- Group coaching 1 coach : 24 children
- Hard Ball Coaching 1 coach : 16 children

These are very different from child supervision ratios.

2. Supervision ratios

These are required at all sessions, regardless of where they are held or which activities the children are doing. They relate to managing groups and ensuring sufficient adults are present to deal with any issue or incident that may arise. For single sex groups there must be at least one adult of the same gender. For mixed groups there must be at least one male and one female supervising adult. Ratios relate to adults and children i.e. those over 18 looking after those under 18. Volunteers under 18 must not be used in the calculations.

Minimum supervision ratios are:

- Aged 8 and under 1 adult : 8 children
- Aged 9 and over 1 adult : 10 children

Drinks breaks

As part of the responsibilities of supervising children, it is vital all players drink appropriate amounts of water to avoid any possible risk of dehydration.

Ensure regular intervals for drinks are arranged, particularly in matches of over 20 overs per innings, or in hot weather

Plan drinks breaks in practice sessions and matches every 20-40 minutes on warm sunny days. Avoid waiting for children to say they are thirsty before planning a drinks break as thirst is an indication of dehydration

Remember children tend to dehydrate more quickly than adults

Risk assessments

These should be undertaken on all facilities and venues used by the club (not away matches) and should be updated annually and after changes to the facility.

2. Wearing of Cricket Helmets by Young Players

This guidance applies to all players up to the age of 18 both in open age group cricket and all junior cricket played with a hard cricket ball. It applies to matches and practice sessions.

Helmets with a faceguard or grille must be worn when batting against a hard ball.

Wicket keepers must wear a helmet with a faceguard, or a wicketkeeper face protector, when standing up to the stumps.

Helmets are widely available. From Spring/Summer 2014 a new British Standard **BS7928:2013** will apply and all new helmets from 1st July will have to conform to this. *Labels will clearly state whether testing has been against junior balls, adult balls, or both.* Helmets which have already been tested against the old **BS7928:1998** standard will continue to be available for sale, and will not be withdrawn.

Wicketkeeper face protectors are covered by British Standard BS7929-2:2009

3. Fielding Regulations

- No young player in the Under 15 age group shall be allowed to field closer than 8 yards (7.3m) from the middle stump, except behind the wicket on the offside, until the batsman has played at the ball
- No young player in the Under 13 age group, or younger, shall be allowed to field closer than 11 yards (10m) from the middle stump, except behind the wicket on the offside, until the batsman has played at the ball
- These minimum distances apply, even if the player is wearing a helmet
- Should a young player come within the restricted distance the umpire must stop the game immediately and instruct the fielder to move back
- In addition, any young player under 18 must wear a helmet and, for boys, an abdominal protector when fielding within 6 yards (5.5m) of the bat, except behind the wicket on the offside.
- Players should wear appropriate protective equipment whenever they are fielding in a position where they feel at risk

4. Fast Bowling Directives

These are designed to raise awareness of the need to nurture and protect young bowlers through their formative years. They apply to girls and boys and any reference to he/his should be interpreted to include she/her.

A fast bowler is defined as a bowler to whom a wicket keeper in the same age group would, in normal circumstances, stand back to take the ball.

There are four main areas to be aware of when assessing injury risk to fast bowlers:

- Overbowling
- Technique
- Physical Preparation
- Equipment

1. Overbowling

Overbowling is a common cause of back injuries. Much of the damage occurs early in the playing career, especially during growth spurts, although the effects do not often show themselves until the late teens.

The following Directives provide sensible playing and training levels.

Directives for matches:

AGE	MAX OVERS PER SPELL	MAX OVERS PER DAY
Up to 13	5 overs per spell	10 overs per day
U14, U15	6 overs per spell	12 overs per day
U16, U17	7 overs per spell	18 overs per day
U18, U19	7 overs per spell	18 overs per day

Directives for practice sessions:

AGE	MAX BALLS PER SESSION	MAX SESSIONS PER WEEK
Up to 13	30 balls per session	2 sessions per week
U14, U15	36 balls per session	2 sessions per week
U16, U17	36 balls per session	3 sessions per week
U18, U19	42 balls per session	3 sessions per week

It is recommended that in any seven day period a fast bowler should not bowl more than four days in that period and for a maximum of 2 days in a row.

Having completed a spell the bowler cannot bowl again, from either end, until the equivalent number of overs to the length of his spell have been bowled from the same end. A bowler can change ends without ending his current spell provided he bowls the next over he legally can from the other end.

Once a bowler covered by these Directives has bowled in a match he cannot exceed the maximum number of overs per day for his age group even if he subsequently bowls spin. He can exceed the maximum number of overs per spell if bowling spin, but cannot then revert to bowling fast until an equivalent number of overs to the length of his spell have been bowled from the same end.

If he bowls spin without exceeding the maximum number of overs in a spell the maximum will apply as soon as he reverts to bowling fast.

Outdoor Nets:

The emphasis on all nets should be on quality rather than quantity. Young fast bowlers should focus their efforts on shorter, more intense spells. They should be made aware of the importance of warming up and warming down as part of their session.

Indoor Nets:

In the period between the end of the cricket season and Christmas, indoor practice for fast bowlers should be kept to an ABSOLUTE MINIMUM. Risks can be minimised by using appropriate surfaces or practising on grass.

Force absorption and surfaces:

Concrete	0% force reduction
Uniturf on concrete	7% force reduction
Uniturf & mat	15% force reduction
Natural turf	34% force reduction
Synthetic & underlay	49% force reduction

2. Technique

It is crucial that bowlers are encouraged to adopt a safe action early in their development. Bowlers should either have a SIDE-ON, a FRONT-ON or a MIDWAY/NEUTRAL action, but **SHOULD NEVER MIX THE ACTIONS**. The mixed actions (of which there are two main types) are a major cause of back injuries, because they cause an unnecessary spinal twist. Excessive hyperextension of the back during the delivery stride is also a contributing factor.

For further clarification of mixed actions consult the 'ECB Coaches Manual' or an appropriately qualified coach.

3. Physical preparation

A well structured, cricket specific training programme is essential to develop, and maintain, the strength, endurance and flexibility required for fast bowling. It is one of the most injury-labile non-contact activities in sport and the need for the fast bowlers to be amongst the fittest and best prepared players in the team cannot be over-emphasised. Bowlers should WARM UP and STRETCH thoroughly before bowling and training, and should WARM DOWN and STRETCH afterwards. A good warm up helps to encourage a more professional approach, helps team spirit and can actually improve performance. It also helps to reduce the chance of an injury occurring.

4. Equipment

Impact forces of up to eight times body weight can be experienced during the delivery stride. Without the appropriate footwear, these forces must be absorbed by the feet, ankles, knees and lower back of the bowler. It is therefore essential that bowlers minimise these effects by absorbing them with the use of efficient, well-fitting, cushioned boots or shoes and if required, absorbent insoles. The use of running shoes, basketball-type boots or good cross-trainers is also essential as they are designed to cope with the types of forces experienced when bowling on hard surfaces.