



ECB Guidelines for Junior Players in Open Age Group Cricket

The ECB has issued guidance covering the selection and participation of young players in open age group cricket. The ECB issued these guidelines for the 2011 season onwards.

- Making the step up from junior to open age group cricket is a significant event in any player's cricket experience. It is the responsibility of all clubs to ensure that the player's safety, personal development needs and overall cricket experience are considered.
- There is no definitive age at which a player should be introduced to open age group cricket. 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. **That said clubs, squad coaches and managers must take into account the requirements on age detailed in the last bullets of this guidance.**
- ECB Fast Bowling Directives and Fielding Regulations should always be adhered to.
- When selected, clubs should give players an opportunity 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, of all forms of effort even when children are not successful. Try to put them in situations where they will experience some success (however small) and ensure plenty of praise and encouragement.
- Try to involve them in all aspects of the game wherever possible i.e. socialising, team talks, practice, decision making and so on, so that they feel part of the team. Where possible select the child alongside a family member or friend to make them feel more comfortable and able to perform.
- 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.

Clubs have a Duty of Care to each child. This Duty of Care should be interpreted in two ways:

- 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.
- Players who are selected in a **Welsh** U12 squad in spring for a summer squad for that season are eligible to play open age cricket. That is providing they are at least 11 years old, are in School Year 7 on 1st September in the year preceding the season, and have written parental consent to play.

This means boys and girls who are **Welsh** squad players, are able to play open age group cricket if they are in an U12 age group and are a minimum of 11 years old on 1st September of the year preceding the season.

District and club players who are not in Welsh squads must wait until they reach the U13 age group, be in Year 8 and be 12 years old on 1st September of the preceding year before being able to play in any open age group cricket. As before written parental consent is required for these players.

Players who are in Year 9 and 13 years of age on 1st of September of the preceding year are eligible to play without written parental consent.

In allowing these players to play in open age cricket it is essential clubs and coaches recognise the 'Duty of Care' obligations they have towards these young players. Before allowing an eligible 11 or 12 year old to play at your club, consult the Club Welfare Officer. Remember - Child Welfare is Paramount.