Safeguarding Information for Captains of Open Age Cricket Team

Club Safeguarding Officers: You may need to adapt this depending on the size of your club, number of Open Age teams, Leagues you play in etc.

You will no doubt be well aware of your role as Team Captain pertaining to the actual game of cricket, but you also need to be aware of your safeguarding responsibilities as a Captain.

You have a duty of care, on behalf of your Club for the well-being of all under 18s in yours and the opposition's team.

You must have a current ECB DBS. If you don't have one, ask your Club Safeguarding Officer to start the process for you, it's free and easy to obtain.

Clubs rely on the development of younger players as these players often subsequently become members of their Open Age teams. You can play an important part in this transition; the experience they receive could develop their lifelong interest and skills – **or put them off completely**. Whilst it is appreciated these younger players (aged between 12 and 17) often want to be treated as adults, if they do not receive the right sort of understanding, encouragement and support, many of them will leave the game.

Kent County Cricket and the ECB actively encourages the development of these young players and to help you, it is important you follow the guidance set out in Safe Hands, which is Cricket's Policy for Safeguarding Children. This can be found, along with other useful documents in the ECB Safeguarding Kit Bag: England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) - The Official Website of the ECB

Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- Take your responsibility seriously
- Make sure you know who your Club Safeguarding Officer is, and how to contact them
- Know how to respond to a disclosure from a child
- Report any concerns or worries you have about a child, to your Club Safeguarding Officer
- Inform the Umpire about all Under 18s in your team
- Ensure you have the emergency contact details for any Under 18s in your team. Importantly, are there any medical conditions or allergies you need to be aware of? (The Club Safeguarding Officer or Secretary should supply you with this information, which should be treated as confidential)
- Welcome and include new Under 18 players in your team and tell them to come and talk to you about any concerns they have regarding their game

- Encourage good sportsmanship within your team, recognising good play both in your team and the opposition and recognising good performances and efforts of young people, not just match results
- Provide an opportunity for young players to show their talents in an appropriate way – children who are just used as fielders will not fully experience the game
- Treat everyone equally and do not discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, nationality, colour, parental or marital status, religious belief, class or social background, sexual preference or political belief
- Challenge any form of bullying of Under 18s
- Anyone under 18 is a child in the eyes of the law; Copy the parents of all under 18s into any texts, e mails and other forms of social media you send to team members. Best practice is only to communicate with parents of children under 18, but check your club policy on this – your club may decide it is appropriate for you to contact children aged over 16 about team selection – but only if you always copy the parents in
- Ensure you are aware of the transport policy in your club – ECB guidance is that all Under 18s/their parents are responsible for arranging their own transport to and from matches (eg they take them themselves or arrange for their child to go with a friend or other member of the team) – the Club/You should **not** arrange the transport, otherwise you and / or the club risk being considered liable in the event of an incident or accident
- Ensure you are aware of the changing room policy in your club regarding Under 18s. Under 18s should change separately from over 18s and be given the opportunity of changing at home
- Be aware that if Under 18s have to share a changing room with Over 18s, you must ensure an appropriate plan is in place so they are not changing and/or showering at the same time.
- Ensure you are aware of your club's policy for mobile phones in changing rooms: ECB guidance is that no mobile phones are allowed to be used in the changing rooms for any purpose. This is because photos and videos can be taken and go viral in seconds or be used for other purposes that would cause safeguarding concerns. This means phones should not be used at all – including for playing music or checking texts and e-mails etc as it is not possible to ensure someone is not covertly taking photos.

- Ensure you are aware of the ECB Guidelines on Playing Open Age Cricket https://www.kentcricket.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Consent-Form_Juniors-Playing-in-Open-Age-Cricket_Exceptional-Circumstances-Nov24.docx
- Ensure you are aware of the ECB Guidelines on the Wearing Helmets by Young Players England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) - The Official Website of the ECB
- Ensure you are aware of the 2020-Fielding-Regulations.pdf
- Ensure you are aware of the Recreational-Fast-Bowling-Guidance-2024.pdf
- Ensure you are aware of the ECB Concussion Guidance

DON'T:

- Engage in any form of sexually related contact with an Under 18 player including sexual innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms
- Allow under age players in your care to drink alcohol
- Communicate by any form of social media or phone with anyone under the age of 18 in your club. Your Club may decide Captains can communicate with over 16s about team selection. If so – ALWAYS copy the parents in, and ensure the messages only relate to team selection and team matters. This is to safeguard you as well as the child. If you fail to copy a parent in and the child complains about the content, it will be very difficult to justify your actions at a later stage
- Allow bullying or swearing at young players (or indeed any players) or any behaviour they might find intimidating
- Select under age players for your team. ECB guidelines state the minimum age is Under 13 age group players, who are in Year 8 age group and aged 12 on 1st September of the preceding year. County squad members selected in a County U12 squad can play providing they are at least 11 years old on 1st September of the preceding year and in Year 7 age group – but only in exceptional circumstances and in consultation with their Kent County Coach. Written parental permission must be obtained for all these players.

Any concerns you have should be reported to your Club Safeguarding Officer. If you cannot contact them, you can contact the Kent County Safeguarding Officer, Bridget Owen on 07807 026247.You can also contact Deputy County Safeguarding Officer, Pete Jones, 07984 908481 or Email: safeguarding@kentcricket.co.uk Further safeguarding contacts can be found on our website.

Your Club, your County Board and the ECB are here to support you, if you have a concern relating to children, then support is available to you – please ask for it.

Many thanks and have a great season!

Bridget Owen
County Safeguarding Officer

Pete Jones
Deputy County Safeguarding Officer

Updated February 2024