KENT CRICKET TALENT PATHWAY SELECTION POLICY

County Age Group 2025/2026

1. Introduction

Kent Cricket is one of the 18 first-class county clubs within the domestic cricket structure of England and Wales. It represents the county of Kent in Division Two. Kent Cricket is also the home of Kent Women, who compete in Tier 2 of the new women's domestic framework launched in 2025.

Kent Cricket is one of the 18 Men's first-class county clubs within the domestic cricket structure of England and Wales. It represents the county of Kent and the London Boroughs falling under its historic county borders.

Kent has a proud history of producing some of the best players for England and Wales in Men's and Women's cricket including a host of current international and professional players.
In addition to our success on the field, we are also on a journey to becoming a more inclusive and diverse club. Our EDI Action Plan highlights that one of our key focuses is 'removing barriers in the Talent Pathways to ensure people from diverse backgrounds can progress into professional teams'.

The policy spans the Kent County Age Group (CAG) squads and teams. Further information on the new pathway structures for men and boys as well as women and girls can be found https://www.kentcricket.co.uk/squads/talent-pathway/.

This overarching policy outlines our approach to identifying and selecting the best and most competitive players and teams in the girls' and boys' pathways while maintaining a fair and objective selection process. The principles outlined in this policy are written to ensure that Kent Cricket takes a holistic approach to identifying, identifying, and developing talented players.

Kent Cricket aims to ensure that specialist and expert panels preside over selection decisions and that there are regular reviews of the process by individuals not involved in selection decisions. Details of this process are outlined further under sections four to eight below.

2. Aim/Objectives

Our selection objectives include:

- **Identify and develop high-potential cricketers** across Kent County, ensuring a clear pathway for high potential cricketers.
- **Provide access to structured, high-quality coaching** that aids individual cricketing and athletic development.
- **Ensure a meritocratic and inclusive selection process**, offering equal opportunities for cricketers from **both state and private school backgrounds**.
- **Select players based on long-term potential** rather than current performance alone, recognising that talent develops at different rates.

3. Player Eligibility

Players are eligible to play for the Kent Talent Pathway if they meet the following criteria

- Live in, or,
- Attend school in, or,
- Are registered to a cricket club in Kent

By making themselves available for selection, a player and their parents/guardians will agree to abide by the policies, rules and regulations of Kent Cricket Club, including the Player Charter and Parent/Guardian Charter.

4. Selection process and panel

Selection is based on both objective and subjective factors, ensuring a balanced approach that prioritises long-term potential over short-term performance. The selection panel evaluates players based on the following:

• **Technical Ability** – Assessed against the Talent Development Framework competencies (https://www.kentcricket.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/KCCC-Talent-Development-Framework-new.pdf)
• **Tactical Understanding** – Players must demonstrate the ability to adapt and make decisions in various match scenarios.
• **Physical Ability** – Includes physical coordination, speed, agility, and overall cricket-specific athleticism**.**
• **Psychosocial factors**– How players respond to coaching, pressure, setbacks, and feedback in training and competition.
• **Growth & Maturation data** – Ensuring fair comparisons among players at similar developmental stages, considering physical differences that may impact performance.

While all criteria are important, selection decisions will consider a balance of these factors, ensuring that potential and long-term development remain the primary focus over short-term success.

The selection process is led by, and discussions will be shared with:

- Head of Talent Pathway
- County Age Group Lead Coaches
- KRDP Regional Managers

Kent Cricket adheres to a strict rule that without exception, selection panels will not include private coaches of players being assessed for selection.

All selection meetings are chaired by either the Operations Executive or Head of Women's cricket to ensure that meetings are standardised and consistent and that the appropriate information about players is supplied at the appropriate times to ensure bias is mitigated wherever possible. The Operations Executive is also responsible for ensuring that the same amount of time is spent

discussing each player to mitigate bias. In addition, notes are taken as much as possible individually by each panel member before any discussion takes place.

An Operations Executive is responsible for providing initial assessment information using 'blind' methods. Therefore, identifiable details like player name, club and school will be removed. The only details provided are date of birth to ensure an additional contextual lens on maturation levels for fairness.

Discussions will be recorded as notational analysis based on four key considerations outlined below under Selection Criteria. These are collected by the Operations Executive and stored securely on our database.

Selection panels and their processes are subject to annual reviews by members of Kent's EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) Steer Co, which must include one Kent Cricket Board member.

5. Selection Criteria

Kent Cricket selects players based on four considerations:

Assessments

Assessments, whether through open trials, training sessions, or scouting situations, are a critical part of how we measure player ability both technically and tactically. The Kent Cricket Talent Development Frameworks for men and boys as well as women and girls list the key criteria in detail which form the bedrock of all assessments.

We strive to ensure that assessments are as fair as possible through the following strategies:

- Consistent template for assessments including consistent scoring mechanisms
- Independent scoring and notes
- 'Blind' strategies such as removing names and branding from kit
- Ongoing training for all coaches and assessors on bias

Performance and Potential

Performance statistics in competitive matches that are recognised in context of being at the appropriate level.

Potential is measured by considering critical contextual information such as maturation levels which will allow us to provide players with more time through a strategy of longer early engagement. Once the initial blind assessment is completed, this additional contextual information is considered, such as physical and mental attributes, which are also key criteria outlined in the Talent Development Frameworks.

Team Balance

Each squad or team should reflect a strategic composition and balance to win every game of cricket and ultimately, the ECB competitions at various age levels. The playing philosophy of the

Pathway teams will be in alignment with that of both the Men's and Women's senior team across all formats of the game.

Attitude and commitment

We consider a player's commitment to attending training and fixtures. Participation in other sports is encouraged but we also expect there is suitable level of attendance to allow a player to develop as a cricketer. We encourage players and parents to communicate if there are difficulties or unforeseen circumstances which may cause barriers to availability so that we these can be taken into fair consideration.

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6. Selection Timeline

Selection occurs through a structured process that provides multiple opportunities for observation where appropriate:

• **Observation Days (May – August)** – Match play opportunities allow players to demonstrate their skills in competitive game scenarios.
• **Feedback & Progression Monitoring** – Non-selected players will be provided with written feedback and the opportunity for a 15-minute Teams call

7. Communication and Appeals

Squad selections are announced a minimum of 21 days prior to the convening of any squad. Team selections will be made a minimum of five days before a fixture.

To ensure that we announce selections appropriately to parents or guardians first, we ask that parents or guardians provide up-to-date contact details and communication preferences (i.e. email, phone, post).

If a parent or player reasonably considers that a player should have been selected and was not, an email should be sent to the Head of Talent Pathway's within 48 hours of the squad or team announcement. This appeal will only be admissible if it can be demonstrated that the published selection policy and process has not been followed in its entirety.

The appeals should be addressed to the following:

For boys:

CAG u13 & u14: Pathway Performance Manager

CAG u16 & u18: Head of Talent Pathway

Upon receiving an appeal, a member of the EDI Steer Co at Kent Cricket reviews the process before the relevant addresses highlighted above provide feedback and the final decision.

8. Withdrawal and Deselection

If a selected player withdraws from a squad/fixture, or is deselected for any reason, a replacement will be decided by the age group lead coach from among the identified reserves.

In the event no reserves have been identified, the age group lead coach may nominate a replacement on condition that this is done with the express permission of the Head of Talent Pathway. These individuals will refer to any assessments and notes taken during the relevant selection meetings as well any reserve lists made to ensure that the decision is fair.

9. Data Collection and Storage

It is our ambition that more people from more diverse backgrounds than ever before will be watching, playing or following cricket. To help us monitor and measure our progress, we may collect information, including protected characteristics under the Equality Act. Our principles for collecting and storing this data are as follows:

- Data will always be collected separately from any assessment or selection process.
- Data will always be stored securely.
- We will always ask your permission to collect the data, and you always have an option not to share or prefer not to say.

10. Amendments to the Selection Policy

This selection policy will be reviewed at least annually. Kent's EDI Steer Co, which regularly reviews the process, may also advise that it be revised. Any changes to the policy will be approved by Kent's Director of Cricket.