

ECB RECREATIONAL CRICKET SAFETY REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To accompany the roll-out of the ECB's updated Recreational Cricket Safety Regulations (**Regulations**) and Recreational Cricket Safety Guidelines (**Guidelines**), the ECB has produced the following FAQs and responses.

When do the Regulations come into force and who do they apply to?

The Regulations came into force on 19 March 2025.

The Regulations apply to all participants in Recreational Cricket, which means all cricket activities carried out under the jurisdiction of the ECB which are not carried out by: (i) the England Men's or England Women's teams (ii) Professional County Clubs (including second XI cricket); or (iii) any Hundred Teams. There are certain exemptions for Pathway players, further details of which can be found in the Regulations and Guidelines.

How can clubs, players, parents and officials access the updated Regulations and Guidelines?

Both documents are available at the following weblink:

<https://www.ecb.co.uk/about/policies/regulations/recreational-cricket>

Why have these updated Regulations and Guidelines been introduced?

The new Regulations consolidate all the mandatory requirements set by the ECB relevant to minimum fielding distances, player eligibility, personal protective equipment and fast bowling. This update has taken place for several reasons, including:

- Consolidating multiple documents and de-duplicating repetitive content to increase ease of use and understanding.
- Updating language and terminology.
- Ensuring documents reflect up-to-date research and needs of the game.

To accompany the Regulations, a set of Guidelines have also been published which contain a number of recommendations designed to enhance the safety of everyone involved in Recreational Cricket. The Guidelines cover:

- Personal Protective Equipment.
- Fast Bowling recommendations that supplement the Fast Bowling Regulations.
- First Aid provision by Clubs.

Written parental consent for Junior Cricketers playing Open Age Cricket is now mandatory, who is responsible for obtaining this consent?

The requirement to obtain written parental consent before a child plays in Open Age Cricket is not new and existed under the previous regulatory regime. Parents should not allow their children to play in Open Age Cricket unless they have consented to this, and Clubs who wish to play children in Open Age Cricket should ensure that they have a written record evidencing parental consent for this to happen. There is a template consent form appended to the Regulations which parents and Clubs can complete to evidence this consent being in place.

Although not strictly required, it is best practice for consent to be renewed each season, and it is also recommended that fresh consent be obtained before a child plays in Open Age Cricket for a new Club.

There is no requirement for consent forms to be checked prior to the commencement of any fixtures in Open Age Cricket, but if a captain suspects that any player in the opposing team is not eligible to play Open Age Cricket by virtue of their age, they must raise their concern with the opposing team's captain; if after discussing the matter they are still not satisfied, the captain concerned must report the matter to the relevant competition organiser.

Is the template consent form for Junior Cricketers to play in Open Age Cricket mandatory?

A child cannot play in Open Age Cricket unless their parent has provided written consent for this to occur. The consent form appended to the Regulations is a template that players and Clubs can choose to use to manage this process, and although the ECB would encourage the use of this form, it is not mandatory.

A Club may already have an established registration process which asks for additional consents such as medical and/or photography: if a Club wishes to maintain this process then consent to play in Open Age Cricket can be provided as part of this process. Consent via a digital system and/or application can be provided but must contain parents' details and the date.

The requirement for a child to be in year 8 before they can play in Open Age Cricket has been removed: can any 12-year-old now play Open Age Cricket?

The Regulations govern a Junior Cricketer's general eligibility to participate in Open Age Cricket; they do not say whether that cricketer should play in Open Age Cricket, as that is a decision which must be carefully considered and taken by the player, their parent and their Club. The Regulations focus on the age of a player at the time they wish to play in Open Age Cricket, as opposed to what academic year they are in, in order to make the eligibility rules clearer to understand and implement across the game.

In conjunction with this change, the Regulations list a number of considerations that Clubs must have regard to when deciding whether to play a Junior Cricketer in Open Age Cricket (or in an older Age Group). These are accessible in full in **Regulation 3.4.1**, but in summary:

- i. The child should not be used to make up numbers in an older Age Group team or in Open Age Cricket.
- ii. The child should be of sufficient skill and/or physical capability to safely participate, and have sufficient confidence and emotional maturity to fit in.
- iii. No child should be put in a position that involves an unreasonable physical or emotional risk to them.
- iv. The child should be familiar with at least some of the individuals in that team before playing with them, for example through training or being coached by them.
- v. The child should be involved in all aspects of the game, such as team talks and decision-making, so that they feel part of the team.
- vi. The Club must ensure that they adhere to the ECB's Safe Hands Policy so that the child can safely participate in cricket with adults.
- vii. The Club must have appropriately DBS checked adults to supervise the child in Open Age Cricket.

In addition, where a Club considers that the playing of a child in Open Age Cricket (or out of their usual Age Group) is leading to a situation of potential disparity i.e. where there are differences in players' strength, skill, or physique that pose a risk of serious injury, the ECB's Disparity Regulations must be followed and will take precedence over the eligibility rules contained in the Safety Regulations.

Do the Regulations apply to players according to their Age Group or based on their actual age?

The Regulations apply to Junior Cricketers based on their chronological age and not by the Age Group they are playing in. For example, a 14-year-old must follow the minimum fielding distance specified for that age, regardless of whether they are playing in an U15s match (or any other Age Group for which they are eligible to play in).

Do the Regulations apply to the age of the child on a given day, or their age at the commencement of the preceding school year?

The Regulations apply based on the age of the child on the day of the relevant activity that triggers a requirement under the Regulations.

What happens if the Regulations and Guidelines are not followed?

The ECB urges all participants in Recreational Cricket, whether they are players, parents, team managers, club officials or match officials, to read and follow the Regulations and Guidelines so that everyone can help ensure the game is played as safely as possible. For those participants that benefit from ECB-organised insurance against claims arising from accidents or injuries, please note that a failure to follow the Regulations or Guidelines could potentially put the availability of that insurance cover at risk, depending on the particular facts surrounding the breach of the Regulations.