

# SVCC Children Playing in Open Age Group Adult Cricket Policy

The Children Act defines a child as a person under 18 years of age.

The ECB has issued guidance covering the selection and participation of children (young players) in open age group cricket adult teams. This is to help clubs decide when to select children for open age group cricket and how best to help their cricketing development. The policy applies to all child players with the overall aim to allow children to develop their cricket in safety, but also not to spoil the game for adults. This policy applies to all training/nets as well as all SVCC matches.

- Making the step up from junior teams to open age group adult cricket is an important event in any cricket player's experience. The player's safety, personal development needs and overall cricket experience must be considered;
- Each case must be determined on an individual basis, depending on the player's ability and stage of cognitive and emotional maturity to take part in open age adult cricket as part of selection.
- Any children playing should be involved in all aspects of the game wherever possible i.e. team talks, practice, decision making and so on, so they feel part of the team;
- Children will often feel more comfortable and able to perform if they have a family member or friend involved. Children's early experiences will remain with them and will often determine whether they want to remain playing cricket or give up;
- The captain must inform the Umpires and opposition captains of children involved.
- SVCC will provide an opportunity for children players to show their talents in an appropriate way. Children who are just used as fielders will not fully experience the game;
- SVCC Captains, coaches and other players must be supportive at all times, for all forms of effort even when children are not successful, including opposition children players. The SVCC team must put them in situations where they will experience some success (however small) and ensure they give plenty of praise and encouragement;

Relevant ECB Guidance must be observed on the use of helmets, on fast bowling and for fielding regulations which must always be adhered to for children in open age group adult cricket matches. Reference must also be made to other key SVCC policies, for example covering transport and changing rooms.

## Minimum Age Restrictions

The minimum age for children playing in adult open age cricket is the U13 age group. Potential players must be in Year 8, and 12 years old on the 1st September of the preceding year. Written parental consent is required to the Captain and the Club Safeguarding Officers.

Children who are selected in a County U12 squad for a summer squad – are also eligible to play adult open age cricket. This 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 the same written parental consent as above.

SVCC captains, coaches and adult players must recognise the 'duty of care' obligations they have towards child players in open age cricket.

The duty of care should be interpreted in two ways:

- Not to place a child in a position that involves an unreasonable risk, taking account of the circumstances of the match and the relative skills of the child;
- 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.

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