



Sevenoaks Vine Cricket Club

Policy 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. This is to help clubs decide when to select young players in open age group cricket and how best to help their cricketing development when they play within open age groups. The guidance applies to boys and girls. Put simply, the overall aim is to allow young players to develop in safety, but not to spoil the game for adults. For the avoidance of doubt, this guidance applies to training and nets as well as games, for men's and women's cricket, and for the indoor game.

General

- Making the step up from junior to open age group cricket is an important event in any player's cricket experience. The player's safety, personal development needs and overall cricket experience must be considered;
- Coaches and Team Managers must take into account the requirements on age detailed in this policy;
- 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 cricket. The minimum age guidance provided below MUST be followed;
- Juniors should be involved in all aspects of the game wherever possible i.e. socialising, 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 also playing in the side. 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;
- SVCC will provide an opportunity for 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 players must be supportive at all times, for all forms of effort even when children are not successful. The SVCC team must put them in situations where they will experience some success (however small) and ensure plenty of praise and encouragement;
- The captain must inform the Umpires of under 18s in the side.

Restrictions

ECB Helmets, Fast Bowling Directives and Fielding Regulations must always be adhered to for junior players in Open age group cricket. Reference must also be made to other key SVCC policies covering Transport and Changing Rooms.

Minimum age

The minimum age for Open Age cricket is the U13 age group. Players must be in Year 8, and 12 years old on the 1st September of the preceding year. This applies to all club and district players who are not in a County or Area squad. Written parental consent is required.

Exceptionally, players who are selected in a County U12 squad in spring for a summer squad - are also eligible to play 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 written parental consent to play.

ECB recommends that at under 12 level that the focus is on participation rather than talent identification, and many counties no longer run under 12 squads. Inclusion of ANY Under 12s in Open Age teams should be an exception and not an expectation.

SVCC Captains, coaches and players must recognise the 'duty of care' obligations they have towards young players in Open Age cricket.

The 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.