

Welfare

(a) Except as countermanded by a local playing condition, all league clubs must comply with all the current ECB Directives and guidelines including adopting the ECB Directive on Safeguarding of Children.

(b) All League clubs must have a trained Welfare Officer on their club committees. Clubs are encouraged to ensure that all those with direct contact with minors (under 18s and below) hold an up to date Cricket DBS certificate. The Club Welfare Officer can assist with this process.

(c) For all League and cup matches, there shall be a lower age limit, **ALL players must be 12 years of age or older on 31st August of the previous year**. An exception will be made for any player who is 11 years old (under 12) at 31st August of the previous year if they are shown to be included in a County Squad for that age group in lists supplied before the season by their relevant County Cricket Board. All players over 11 and under 14 on the date of the match must complete a League Young Player Consent Form which is obtainable from the League Administrator and available to be downloaded from the WCL website; www.worcscl.org. The form must be delivered to the Administrator at least 24 hours before the match. This form will contain assurances from Parents, the club and the County Boards Performance Team that the player is able and competent to play. This consent form will remain in force until the player reaches their 14th birthday.

ECB Directives

ECB Fast Bowling Match Directives

Age	Max Overs Per Spell	Max Overs Per Day
Up To 13	5	10
U14 / U15	6	12
U16, U17, U18, U19	7	18

For the purpose of these Directives a fast bowler is defined as a bowler to whom a wicket keeper in the same age group would in normal circumstances stand back to take the ball.

Having completed a spell the bowler cannot bowl again, from either end, until the equivalent number of overs to the length of his* spell have been bowled from the same end. A bowler can change ends without ending his current spell provided that he bowls the next over that he legally can from the other end. If this does not happen his spell is deemed to be concluded. If play is interrupted, for any reason, for less than 40 minutes any spell in progress at the time of the interruption can be continued after the interruption up to the maximum number of overs per spell for the appropriate age group. If the spell is not continued after the interruption the bowler cannot bowl again, from either end, until the equivalent number of overs to the length of his spell before the interruption have been bowled from the same end. If the interruption is of 40 minutes or more, whether scheduled or not, the bowler can commence a new spell immediately.

In matches of 20 overs or less per team where the competition regulations only allow bowlers to bowl less than or equal to the number of overs specified as the maximum in a spell in the Directives the provisions requiring an equivalent number of overs from the same end to have elapsed before a subsequent spell can commence shall not apply (e.g. in any age group competition where a maximum of 4 overs per bowler is allowed these may be bowled at any time in the innings irrespective of the number of spells bowled).

Once a bowler covered by these Directives has bowled in a match he cannot exceed the maximum number overs per day for his age group even if he subsequently bowls spin. He can exceed the maximum overs per spell if bowling spin, but cannot then revert to bowling

fast until an equivalent number of overs to the length of his spell have been bowled from the same end.

If he bowls spin without exceeding the maximum number of overs in a spell the maximum will apply as soon as he reverts to bowling fast. Captains, Team Managers and Umpires are asked to ensure that these Directives are followed at all times.

For guidance it is recommended that in any 7 day period a fast bowler should not bowl more than 4 days in that period and for a maximum of 2 days in a row.

Age groups are based on the age of the player at midnight on 31st August in the year preceding the current season.

*Any reference to he/his should be interpreted to include she/her.

ECB Safety Guidance on the Wearing of Cricket Helmets by Young Players

In February 2015 the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) issued updated safety guidance on the wearing of helmets by young players up to the age of 18. In brief, the guidance recommends that:

- helmets with a faceguard or grille must be worn when batting against a hard cricket ball in matches and in practice sessions
- young players should regard a helmet with a faceguard as a normal item of protective equipment when batting, together with pads, gloves and, for boys, an abdominal protector (box)
- young wicket keepers must wear a helmet with a faceguard, or a wicketkeeper face protector when standing up to the stumps.

The ECB has recently announced new helmet safety measures, which are being introduced with a view to reducing the risk of head and facial injuries within the game. The purpose of this brief note is to assist Leagues and Clubs at the recreational level to understand the key elements of these changes and what they mean.

Players over the age of 18

The ECB strongly recommends that all adult recreational cricketers should wear helmets for certain activities, preferably which meet the most recent British Safety Standard (see below). This recommendation applies to batting against all types of bowling, wicket-keepers standing up to the wicket (who may as an alternative wear face protectors) and fielders fielding closer than eight yards from the batsman's middle stump, except behind the wicket on the off side (i.e; in the slip cordon, gully or a deeper backward point).

Under 18s

The position in relation to Under 18s currently remains unchanged, and is governed by the 'ECB Guidance on the Wearing of Cricket Helmets by Young Players' (www.ecb.co.uk/youngplayershelmetguidance). In essence, batsmen and wicket-keepers standing up to the stumps must wear head protection when playing or practising. That Guidance should be referred to in full for the position in relation to u18s.

British Safety Standard

The latest British Safety Standard is BS7928:2013 (for both adults and juniors). The full list of helmets meeting this standard is available at www.ecb.co.uk/helmet. With the assistance of schools, cricket clubs and leagues, the wearing of helmets by young players is now standard practice in cricket throughout England and Wales.

For wicket-keeping face protectors the relevant British Safety Standard is BS7929-2:2009 (again, for both adults and juniors).The ECB understands that there is currently no specific women's helmet and as a consequence no specific standard for women's cricket helmets. As the size of the standard women's cricket ball is between the standard men and junior balls, it is recommended that women use helmets that have been tested against both the

men's and junior sized ball, or at least against the junior size ball (as that could potentially get through the gap above the face guard on a men's helmet).

What do Leagues and Clubs need to do?

Whilst it is strongly recommended that all adult recreational cricketers wear helmets in the on-field circumstances detailed above, it is not mandatory for them to do so. For the avoidance of doubt, Leagues or Clubs do not need to go above and beyond the ECB's recommendation by forcing their cricketers to wear helmets. However, Leagues and Clubs in recreational cricket should ensure that their cricketers are made aware of the ECB's above recommendation in relation to helmets, including the need to check that any newly purchased helmets meet the latest British Safety Standard. The ECB recommends that Leagues and Clubs bring the link above i.e (**www.ecb.co.uk/helmets**) to the attention of their cricketers and encourage all cricketers to carefully consider their own health and safety regarding helmet use. Leagues and Clubs should always ensure that they have adequate public liability insurance (covering a liability of a minimum £5m – as required to achieve Club Mark accreditation).

Helmets are widely available and are covered by an updated British Standard (BS7928:2013). A face protector represents an alternative head protection system for young wicket keepers. Wicketkeeper Face Protectors are covered by a new British Standard (BS 7928 – 2 :2009). The ECB strongly recommends that wherever possible junior players use head protectors that have been tested against junior sized cricket balls.

Parental or guardian written consent allowing a young player not to wear a helmet should not be accepted in any form of cricket.

This guidance applies to all players up to the age of 18, both in adult cricket and in all junior cricket played with a hard cricket ball.

The guidance also applies during all practice sessions. Any individual taking responsibility for players should take all reasonable steps to ensure that this guidance is followed at all times.

The ECB asks that the guidance is communicated to the parents or guardians of all young players through clubs and schools, and that young players are not allowed to bat or stand up to the stumps when keeping wicket against a hard ball without wearing appropriate protection.