

GCB Guidelines for Junior Players in Open Age Group Cricket



GCB

The GCB 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 GCB keeps these guidelines under constant review.

The guidance is as follows:

- Making the step up from junior to open age group cricket is a significant event in any player's cricket experience. Ensure the player's safety, personal development needs and overall cricket experience are considered
- "Every player must be of school year 9 or above on the 1st January to be eligible to play senior adult cricket that year".
Players in school year 8 and below on the 1st January of that year might be considered at the discretion of the GYDC committee. Any players under the age of 18 must be signed off by the GYDC Committee and a parent or guardian on a club registration sheet before playing any form of adult club cricket.
- When players of year 8 or below are put forward, any cases will be determined on an individual basis, depending on the player's ability and stage of cognitive and emotional maturity to take part at this level.
- The GCB Fast Bowling Directives and Fielding Regulations should always be adhered to for junior players in open age group cricket
- 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
- Be supportive, at all times, for all forms of effort even when children are not successful. Try and put them in situations where they will experience some success (however small) and ensure plenty of praise and encouragement
- Try and involve them 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

- Remember, 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
- In allowing these players to play in open age cricket it is essential clubs and coaches recognise the 'duty of care' obligations they have towards these young players

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

In addition, the guidelines note the need for clubs to recognise the positive experience young players should have in open age cricket. Clubs should 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.