

Tarleton Cricket Club – Juniors Playing Senior Cricket

ECB Guidelines for Junior Players in Open Age Cricket

3. Eligibility of Junior Cricketers to Play in Open Age Cricket and Playing out of Age Group

3.1 General

3.1.1 Regulation 3 applies to all Junior Cricketers that participate in Hardball Cricket and Softball Cricket. It addresses the eligibility of Junior Cricketers to play in Age Group and Open Age Cricket, including Junior Cricketers that wish to play out of their usual Age Group.

3.1.2 Subject to the rules on player eligibility contained in this Regulation 3, Recreational Cricket Boards and Leagues may set their own Age Group eligibility requirements for their Junior Cricket competitions.

3.1.3 Subject to the provisions of the ECB's Player Gender Eligibility Regulations, only girls may play in any girls' Leagues or competitions unless the rules of that League or competition allow otherwise.

3.1.4 Subject to the provisions of the ECB's Player Gender Eligibility Regulations, girls may play in boys' competitions and Open Age Cricket, and the considerations outlined in Regulation 3.4 must be considered in order to decide whether this is appropriate. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that appropriate changing facilities are in place prior to a girl participating in boys' or Open Age Cricket.

3.1.5 Nothing in this Regulation 3 affects a player's eligibility for the Talent Pathway Programmes or ECB National Competitions, which have their own age eligibility requirements which must be complied with. Notwithstanding anything permitted by this Regulation 3, if a competition acts as a qualifier for an ECB National Competition, teams participating in that competition must meet ECB National Competition eligibility requirements.

3.2 Juniors Playing in Open Age Cricket

3.2.1 Subject to Regulation 3.2.2, Junior Cricketers are not eligible to play Open Age Cricket until they are 12 years old.

3.2.2 In exceptional circumstances only, a player who: (a) is 11 years old; (b) has started school year 7; (c) is selected for a squad in either County Age Group Cricket or a Sub-County Programme; (d) has written approval from their County Talent Pathway Lead; and (e) has written parental consent, is eligible to play Open Age Cricket.

3.2.3 Junior Cricketers who are eligible to play in Open Age Cricket may only participate in Open Age Cricket where written parental consent is provided (please see the template consent form at Appendix 1). 3.2.3 Before allowing any Junior Cricketer to play Open Age Cricket, Clubs must consider the factors referred to in Regulation 3.4 below.

3.2.4 Captains must inform the Appointed Umpire or Acting Umpire (as applicable) of any Junior Cricketers playing in their team in Open Age Cricket.

3.3 Juniors Playing Up Out of Age Group 3.2.3 Junior Cricketers may play in an older Age Group in Junior Cricket than their age if this is permitted by their Recreational Cricket Board or League. 3.3.3 Before allowing any Junior Cricketer to play in an older Age Group, Clubs must consider the factors referred to in Regulation 3.4 below.

3.4 Decision-Making Framework for Juniors Playing In Open Age Cricket or Playing Up Out of Age Group

3.4.1 In addition to any other requirements contained in a Recreational Cricket Board or League's competition eligibility rules, before playing a Junior Cricketer in Open Age Cricket or in an Age Group above that player's usual Age Group, Clubs must have regard to the following considerations:

- a. The decision to play up should be a positive step in that Junior Cricketer's development and should not be based on a need to make up numbers in an older Age Group team or in Open Age Cricket.
- b. The Junior Cricketer should be of sufficient skill and/or physical capability to safely participate in the higher Age Group or in Open Age Cricket. Clubs should also be satisfied that the Junior Cricketer has sufficient confidence and emotional maturity to fit into a different Age Group team or in Open Age Cricket. A Junior Cricketer should not be put in a position that involves an unreasonable physical or emotional risk to them.
- c. Before playing their first game, the Junior Cricketer should have been invited to train with the older Age Group or Open Age Cricket team or should otherwise be familiar with at least some of the individuals in that team, for example through being coached by them or having interacted with them around the Club.
- d. The Junior Cricketer should be involved in all aspects of the game wherever possible, such as socialising, team talks, practice, decision making etc., so that they feel part of the team.
- e. The Club must ensure that they adhere to the ECB's Safe Hands Policy to ensure that a Junior Cricketer can safely participate in Open Age Cricket with adults. For example, the Club should have a plan in place, or suitable facilities, to ensure that the Junior Cricketer will not be required to change or shower alongside adults, and consideration must be given to use of social media groups and transport to/from cricketing activities.
- f. The Club must have appropriately DBS checked adults to supervise Junior Cricketers playing in Open Age Cricket.

3.4.2 Clubs must ensure that a Junior Cricketer playing up does not create a situation that places members of the opposing team in a position whereby they cannot play cricket as they normally would do against adult players. Where a Club considers that the playing of a Junior Cricketer out of their Age Group and/or in Open Age Cricket is leading to situations of potential disparity where there is a concern regarding the safety or ability of a player (or players) to compete, the processes contained in the Disparity Regulations must be followed.

3.5 Juniors Playing Down

3.5.1 Junior Cricketers may play down Age Groups if this is permitted by their Recreational Cricket Board or League. Nothing in this Regulation 3 affects a player's eligibility for ECB National Competitions.

3.5.2 If girls are permitted to play down Age Groups in a particular Recreational Cricket Board or League's competition, the relevant Recreational Cricket Board or League must specify a maximum age for such players and confirm how many older girls can play in any team. These requirements must apply to all Clubs in that competition.