

ECB Guidance for Staff and Volunteers Working with Children

Staff and Volunteers working with children must be vetted as per the 'ECB Guidance on Vetting (ECB DBS) Checks'. The club is responsible for ensuring that this happens.

The ECB is committed to continuing to provide an environment where children are welcomed, feel safe and have their views and feelings taken into consideration.

This guidance is for all staff and volunteers working with children in cricket.

Good practice means:

- Welcoming all children and parents/carers to the club, and having systems in place to ensure you do so.
- Being a friendly professional
- Ensuring cricket is fun and enjoyable, and that fair play is promoted
- Treating all children equally, with respect and dignity
- Being an excellent role model at all times – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol during coaching and being mindful of behaviour around the club
- Always putting the welfare of children first, before winning or achieving goals by encouraging a constructive environment where healthy competition, skill development, fun and achievement are promoted in equal measures
- Always working in an open environment (for example, avoiding being alone with a child, and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- Having excellent interpersonal boundaries, so children know how to behave and what is expected of them
- Building relationships based on trust which enable children to take part in the decision-making process. This will range from asking children if they have enjoyed activities in the training session, or what snacks they would like in the tuck shop, through to having junior representation on committees.
- Being in line with Home Office guidelines which state, if you are in a position of trust and authority, you must not have sexual relationships with 16-17 year olds in your care
- Not tolerating acts of aggression
- Recognising the needs and abilities of children, avoiding too much training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- Giving positive and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Encouraging children to assess their performance based on their own mastery of skills, knowledge and love of the game, rather than on whether they won or lost. Helping children acknowledge the value that good opposition offers their own development as cricketers.
- Working to the ECB guidance on physical contact, where children are always consulted and their agreement gained before any contact is made
- Keeping up-to-date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport
- Ensuring if mixed sex teams are taken away, they are always accompanied by a male and female member of staff

Having the right people in place

- Ensuring while on tour, you do not enter a child's room or invite them into your room – except in an emergency i.e. when very unwell
- Finding out if any children you are coaching have medical conditions that could be aggravated during playing or training
- Keeping a written record any time a child is injured in your care, along with details of any treatment provided
- Promoting good sportsmanship by encouraging children to be considerate of other athletes, officials and club volunteers and by being modest in victory and gracious in defeat
- Helping the ECB to work toward eradicating harassment and abuse of children from cricket

Poor practice means you must never:

- *Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others*
- *Take or drop off a child at an event*
- *Take children to your home or transport them by car, where they will be alone with you*
- *Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games*
- *Share a room with a child*
- *Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching or physical abuse*
- *Take part in, or tolerate, behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a cricketer or that affects their self esteem*
- *Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged*
- *Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun*
- *Make a child cry as a form of control*
- *Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or ignored*

- *Do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves*
- *Shower with a child*
- *Have inappropriate contact with children – for example, by text or social media. ECB guidance is that any electronic or online communications should be via parents and carers*

Any of these can make the environment feel less safe for children, and leave you open to allegations.

Practical guidance on physical contact

The following guidance is about safeguarding children as they learn to play cricket. It will also help to protect adults from unnecessary or malicious allegations when working with children. Always conduct all junior sessions with at least one other adult present. The ECB understands physical contact between a child and an adult may be required to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort.

However, it is important to remember that in cricket today there is a multi-cultural mix of children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, children with disabilities or special needs, and children who may have previously been or are currently being abused. Not all children are used to or are comfortable with any type of touching, be it friendly or otherwise. In many cultures girls in particular are uncomfortable about any kind of touching by a stranger.

All adults must understand that this touching not only involves touching children when showing them cricket postures, but can also include responsive or pleasant actions, for example, when asking the child to carry out a task, or celebrating a win. If any child is not comfortable with physical contact it should be made clear they can make their feelings known privately to the adult. Any contact should be led by the child and not the adult.

Having the right people in place

Physically or visually impaired children may need to be touched in order to help them understand, acquire or visualise a cricket posture. It must be remembered that the guidance detailed below still applies.

In addition, adults must be appropriately dressed and professional when operating in a cricket environment with children.

Never touch a child inappropriately. As a responsible adult you should only use physical contact if its aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques
- Treat an injury
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring
- Meet the requirements of the sport

You should seek to explain the reason for the physical contact to the child i.e. reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission. **Physical contact should always be intended to meet the child's needs NOT the adult's.**

- If a child becomes injured during a junior session and the injury requires the child to be carried to a place of treatment, always seek support from another adult before moving the child. Any first aid administered should be in the presence of another adult or in open view of others
- If the child seems uncomfortable in any way with the physical contact, stop immediately
- If the child you are working with is visually impaired, you should tell them who you are and ask their permission before you come into physical contact with them
- Never attempt to adjust the grip of a child when in the normal batting stance position

- Never find yourself in a situation where you are the only adult present around children, e.g. in changing rooms, showers, or on a minibus
- Where physical contact is for motivational or celebratory reasons, agree with the children, teachers or other appropriate adults that to praise good performance a 'High Five' or similar action will be used
- Never help children dress e.g. to put on pads, helmets, or clothing unless they request this and genuinely require assistance
- Never help children to put on an abdominal protector
- Never take on one to one coaching with a child unless another adult or parent is present
- If you need to communicate with a child for the purposes of organising junior cricket or passing on cricket information, use a parent's mobile telephone number.

If any of the following incidents take place or you observe them, you **MUST** report them to the Club Welfare Officer and make a written note of the event using the ECB Incident Reporting Form and inform parents where appropriate if:

- You accidentally hurt a child
- A child seems distressed in any manner
- A child acts in a sexually inappropriate manner
- A child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

Responding to disclosures, suspicions and allegations

There may be a number of reasons where an adult finds it necessary to report a concern including:

- In response to something a child has said
- In response to something they have seen
- In response to signs or suspicions of abuse
- In response to allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer
- In response to allegations made about a parent, carer or someone not working within cricket
- In response to bullying
- In response to a breach of code of conduct/poor practice
- Observation of inappropriate behaviour

Responding to a child who tells you about abuse

You need to:

- Stay calm; do not show disgust or disbelief
- Keep an open mind
- Do not dismiss the concern, make assumptions or judgements
- Listen carefully to what is said and take the child seriously. Let the child know that if what they tell you makes you at all concerned about them or someone else, you will have to pass the information on to someone who can help them
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing by telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Be very careful not to promise that you will

keep the information to yourself.

- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words. Do this as soon as possible, using the ECB incident reporting form
- Avoid approaching any alleged abuser to discuss the concern. * BE AWARE that the child may use the word 'complaint' rather than allegation.
- Report the incident to the Club Welfare Officer

Recording the incident and confidentiality

Information passed to the ECB, children's social care, LADO and/or the police needs to be as helpful as possible, which is why it is important to make a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Use the ECB Incident Reporting Form wherever possible.

Information needs to include the following:

- Details of the child, for example, age/date of birth, address and gender
- Details of the facts of the allegation or observations
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if it can be given, regarding what has happened and how
- Witnesses to the incident(s)
- The name, address and date of birth of any alleged offender
- Any times, dates or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay
- A signature, date and time on the report

SEE 'What to do if you have Concerns'