

ECB Fast Bowling Match Directives

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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.

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 2000 the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) issued 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 should 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 should wear a helmet with a faceguard or a wicketkeeper face protector when standing up to the stumps.

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. Helmets are widely available and are covered by a British Standard (BS7928:1998). A face protector represents an alternative head protection system for young wicket keepers. Face protectors are, at the time of publication of this guidance, a relatively new innovation. Wicket keeper Face Protectors are covered by a new British Standard (BS7928-2:2009).

The original guidance allowed parents or guardians to give their written consent to allow a young player not to wear a helmet. However, now parental consent 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 open age 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.

**Additional guidance on what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances' can be obtained from the ECB Cricket Department.*



Fielding Regulations

The ECB has regulations covering the minimum fielding distances for young players in all matches where a hard ball is used.

- No young player in the Under 15 age group or younger shall be allowed to field closer than 8 yards (7.3 metres) from the middle stump, except behind the wicket on the off side, until the batsman has played at the ball.
- For players in the Under 13 age group and below the distance is 11 yards (10 metres).
- These minimum distances apply even if the player is wearing a helmet.
- Should a young player in these age groups come within the restricted distance the umpire must stop the game immediately and instruct the fielder to move back.
- In addition any young player in the Under 16 to Under 18 age groups, who has not reached the age of 18, must wear a helmet and, for boys, an abdominal protector (box) when fielding within 6 yards (5.5 metres) of the bat, except behind the wicket on the off side. Players should wear appropriate protective equipment whenever they are fielding in a position where they feel at risk.
- These fielding regulations are applicable to all cricket in England and Wales. Age groups are based on the age of the player at midnight on 31st August in the year preceding the current season.



ECB Guidelines for Junior Players in Open Age Cricket

The ECB has issued guidance covering the selection and participation of young players in open age group cricket. It is designed to help clubs to 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 ECB keeps these guidelines under review and, following feedback from clubs and leagues, has revised these guidelines for the 2011 season onwards. The ECB will continue to monitor the impact of these guidelines and you are invited to feedback your thoughts and comments in writing to the ECB Non-First Class Cricket Department.

1. Making the step up from junior to open age group cricket is a significant event in any player's cricket experience. Ensure that the player's safety, personal development needs and overall cricket experience are considered.
2. There is no definitive age at which they should be introduced to open age group cricket but determine each case on an individual basis dependent on their ability and stage of cognitive and emotional maturity to take part at this level, however, clubs, squad coaches and managers must take into account the requirements on age at point 9 of this guidance
3. ECB Fast Bowling Directives and Fielding Regulations should always be adhered to for junior players in open age group cricket.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Try and involve them in all aspects of the game wherever possible i.e. socializing, team talks, practice, decision making etc. so that they feel part of the team.
7. Children will often feel more comfortable and able to perform if they have a family member or friend also playing in the side.

8. 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!
9. Players who are selected in a County U12 squad in Spring for a summer squad or in another squad deemed by ECB Performance Managers to be of a standard above 'District level' for that season are eligible to play Open Age Cricket. This is providing they are at least 11 years old, and in School Year 7 on 1st September in the year preceding the season and have written parental consent to play. In allowing these players to play in Open Age Cricket it is essential that Clubs and Coaches recognise the 'Duty of Care' obligations towards these young players.

This means that County Squad and Area Squad players, both boys and girls are able to play Open Age Group Cricket if they are in U12 Age group and are a minimum of 11 years old on 1st September of the year preceding the season. District and club players who are not in a County or Area squads must wait until they reach the Under 13 age group, 12 years old, Year 8 on 1st September of the preceding year prior to being able to play in any Open Age Cricket, again written parental consent is required for these 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 and leagues to recognize the positive experience that young players should have in open age cricket and thus 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.

