

Safety Guidelines

Helmets

Any player under the age of 18 playing in the Saracens Hertfordshire Premier Cricket League, County 20/20 or County Trophy matches must wear a helmet when batting and when standing up to the stumps when keeping wicket.

The Umpires must be provided with a team sheet before the start of the match identifying any player who is not yet 18 on the date of the match. Captains, coaches, managers and umpires must always ensure that a young player wears a helmet.

Youth Players in Open Age Cricket

To be eligible to play in Open Age cricket, Youth players must be in Under 13s age group or older and adhere to the following conditions: (Under 13 at midnight on 31st August in the year preceding the current season)

- The Parent/Guardian of an Under 13 must give written permission to their club to play in the Saracens Hertfordshire Cricket League. Form on SHPCL website
- This form must be received by the club prior to registering the player in SHPCL
- This form must be signed by an ECB CA Level Two Coach to verify that the players' development would be enhanced by playing in Open Age cricket
- The Club's Welfare Officer should keep the written permission in a safe place
- SHPCL Committee may, in certain circumstances, ask clubs to provide evidence of a player's written permission

Players in Under 12s County Spring & Summer Squads are also eligible to play, provided conditions above are adhered to.

Where players are required to stand as an umpire, only as a last resort should players aged under 18 umpire any part of a match, unless qualified as an umpire or by agreement between both captains. Where possible, any under 18 umpire should stand only at the striker's end, with an adult at the bowler's end.

Captains' responsibilities

The captain is responsible for the safety of any young players in his team. Captains must ensure young players wear a helmet in adult cricket regardless of the speed of the bowling or the circumstances of the match.

Captains must also ensure when placing their field that young players do not infringe the fielding regulations for young players issued by the ECB.

Responsibility and action of umpires

The umpires should establish before the start of any match the age group of any young players taking part in the match. This will require a meeting with the manager, coach or captain.

When the captain has indicated that there are young players taking part, the umpires should remind the captain that he is responsible for the safety of the young players throughout the match. The umpires should not allow play to proceed if the young player is not wearing a helmet in line with League regulations.

Umpires should also ensure that young players do not infringe the fielding regulations for young players issued by the ECB.

What are the legal implications?

If a young player receives a head injury in a situation where the guidance had not been followed, there is a material risk that the person responsible for the player at the time the injury was sustained would be potentially liable for damages for negligence. In order to establish negligence it would be necessary to show:

- that a person owes the cricketer a duty of care
- that the person acted in breach of that duty of care; and
- that the cricketer suffered loss or damage as a result of that breach.

It will normally be possible to identify who was responsible for the safety of the player at the time the injury was sustained.

Definition of a Young Player

In law a young person is deemed to become an adult at age 18. The law also imposes a duty of care on those responsible for minors (i.e. those under the age of 18). The ECB is recommending that this guidance is followed by all players up to the age of 18.

Fielding Regulations

In line with 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.