**Harrogate Cricket Club**

**Cricket Specific Safeguarding Policy**

1. **Supervising Children at Cricket Sessions**

When planning children’s cricket, or general, sessions, sufficient adults must be present to adequately supervise all participants and manage any incident that may arise.

It is a basic requirement of all sessions and matches involving children that a minimum of two responsible adults will be present in all circumstances. In matches there must always be at least two adults present and responsible for the team.

The ECB provides two different sets of ratios for working with children. It is vital coaches, and other key club personnel, understand the distinction between these two types of ratios. They are each explained below:

**Qualified coach ratios required for coaching sessions**

The ECB Community Coach Education department has produced appropriate ratios based on the number of qualified coaches required to run different technical disciplines within the game. The ratios of qualified coaches to children are as follows:

* Net Coaching: 1 coach : 8 children
* Group Coaching: 1 coach: 24 children
* Hard Ball Coaching: 1 coach: 16 children

These coaching ratios are very different to the child supervision ratios, which are required at all sessions regardless of where these are held or which activities the children are doing. Details of supervision ratios are shown below:

**Supervision ratios**

Supervision ratios relate to managing groups of children and ensuring sufficient adults are present to deal with any issue or incident that may arise. For single sex groups, there must be at least one same gender member of staff. For mixed groups there must be at least one male and one female supervising adult.

**There must always be a minimum of two adults present**

The supervision ratios that must be adhered to as a minimum for looking after groups of children are as follow:

Aged 8 and under – 1 adult : 8 children

Aged 9 and over – 1 adult : 10 children

It is also important for clubs to note that these ratios relate to adults and children i.e. those over 18 looking after those under 18.

Volunteers who are under 18 years of age must not be used in the calculations for supervision ratios.

**Drinks breaks**

As part of our responsibilities in supervising children, it is vital all players drink appropriate amounts of water to avoid any possible risks of dehydration during matches and practice sessions.

Coaches, teachers, managers and umpires are encouraged to:

* Ensure regular intervals for drinks are arranged, particularly in matches of more than 20 overs per innings, or in hot weather
* Plan drinks breaks in practice sessions and matches every 20-40 minutes on warm sunny days. (This may sound excessive but on hot days players can need up to two or three litres each to stay fully hydrated)
* Avoid waiting for children to say they are thirsty before planning a drinks break as thirst is an indication of dehydration. The ECB Sports Science support pack (via e-learning portal) reminds us that children tend to dehydrate more quickly than adults.

**Facilities and venues used for children’s cricket**

HCC undertakes risk assessment on all facilities and venues used for any club activities, regardless of ownership of that facility or venue. Risk assessments are done in advance and updated on an annual basis, or if changes to the facility have taken place.

1. **Wearing of Cricket Helmets**

Since 2000 the ECB has issued safety guidance on the wearing of helmets by young players up to the age of 18.

This guidance applies to all players up to the age of 18, both in open age group 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 this guidance is followed at all times.

With the assistance of schools, cricket clubs leagues and umpires, 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) and a new specification, for head protectors on sale from Spring/Summer 2014 (BS7928/2013) – see below.

A face protector represents an alternative head protection system for young wicket keepers. Wicketkeeper face protectors are covered by British Standard (BS7929 – 2 :2009).

Helmets with a faceguard or grille should be worn when batting against a hard cricket ball in matches and in practice sessions. Wicket keepers should wear a helmet with a faceguard, or a wicketkeeper face protector, when standing up to the stumps.

All 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). All young wicketkeepers should regard a helmet with a faceguard or a face protector as a normal part of their protective equipment together with pads, gloves and, for boys, an abdominal protector (box).

There is no exception to be granted in this regard, in any form of cricket.

The ECB asks that this 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.

*Update: In March 2014 the following guidance was issued. This applies to head protectors worn by all cricketers.*

1. **Fielding Regulations**

• 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

1. **Fats Bowling Directives**

**Injury prevention for fast bowlers**

These Directives apply to girls and boys, and any reference to he/his should be interpreted to include she/her.

For the purpose of these Directives a fast bowler should be defined as a bowler to whom a wicket keeper in the same age group would, in normal circumstances, stand back to take the ball.

All coaches are urged to identify those players with the potential to bowl fast and to ensure they follow the Directives in all cricket throughout the season.

There are four main areas to be aware of when assessing injury risk to fast bowlers:

1. Overbowling 2. Technique 3. Physical Preparation 4. Equipment

1. OVERBOWLING:

This is an important consideration especially for young bowlers whose bodies are not fully developed. Recent studies have revealed that overbowling is a common cause of back injuries. Evidence suggests that much of the damage occurs early in the playing career, especially during growth spurts, though the effects do not often show themselves until the late teens. The more talented and more physically mature youngsters are generally most at risk, as they tend to play at more than one age group level.

To ensure that young fast bowlers do not place undue stress on their bodies, every attempt must be made to keep the amount of bowling within reasonable limits. The following Directives provide sensible playing and training levels.

Directives for matches:

AGE: MAX OVERS PER SPELL MAX OVERS PER DAY

Up to 13 5 overs per spell 10 overs per day

U14, U15 6 overs per spell 12 overs per day

U16, U17 7 overs per spell 18 overs per day

U18, U19 7 overs per spell 18 overs per day

Directives for practice sessions:

AGE: MAX BALLS PER SESSION MAX SESSIONS PER WEEK

Up to 13 30 balls per session 2 sessions per week

U14, U15 36 balls per session 2 sessions per week

U16, U17 36 balls per session 3 sessions per week

U18, U19 42 balls per session 3 sessions per week

For guidance it is recommended that in any seven day period a fast bowler should not bowl more than four days in that period and for a maximum of two days in a row.

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 he bowls the next over 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 of 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.

Nets:

Outdoor: The emphasis on all nets should be quality rather than quantity. These Directives will encourage young fast bowlers to focus their efforts on shorter, more intensive spells. Consequently young fast bowlers should be made aware of the importance of warming up and warming down as part of their preparation.

Indoor: In the period between the end of the cricket season and Christmas, indoor practise for fast bowlers should be kept to an ABSOLUTE MINIMUM. The following highlights the risk of playing/practising on hard surfaces such as solid concrete and shows how these forces can be reduced by using appropriate mats or indeed by practising on grass. Concrete offers 0% force absorption whereas grass can offer up to 75%. The 34% offered by natural turf was measured at Trent Bridge on a rock hard Test Match pitch. These figures have major implications for limiting indoor work in the winter, particularly for seamers, and for ensuring that length and intensity of sessions are considered when working on the harder surfaces.

Force absorption and surfaces:

Concrete 0% force reduction

Uniturf on concrete: 7% force reduction

Uniturf + mat: 15% force reduction

Uniturf + 2 mats: 31% force reduction

Natural turf: 34% force reduction

Synthetic + underlay: 49% force reduction

2. TECHNIQUE:

It is crucial that bowlers are encouraged to adopt a safe action early in their development. Bowlers should either have a SIDE-ON, a FRONT-ON or a ‘MIDWAY/NEUTRAL’ action, but SHOULD NEVER MIX THE ACTIONS. The mixed actions (of which there are two main types) are a major cause of back injuries, because they cause an unnecessary spinal twist. Excessive hyperextension of the back during the delivery stride is also a contributing factor.

3. PHYSICAL PREPARATION:

A well structured, cricket specific training programme is essential to develop, and maintain, the strength, endurance and flexibility required for fast bowling. It is one of the most injury-liable non-contact activities in sport and the need for the fast bowlers to be amongst the fittest and best prepared players in the team cannot be over emphasised. Bowlers should WARM UP and STRETCH thoroughly before bowling and training, and should WARM DOWN and STRETCH afterwards. A good warm up helps to encourage a more professional approach, helps team spirit and can actually improve performance. It also helps to reduce the chance of an injury occurring.

4. EQUIPMENT:

Impact forces of up to eight times body weight can be experienced during the delivery stride. Without the appropriate footwear, these forces must be absorbed by the feet, ankles, knees and lower back of the bowler. It is therefore essential that bowlers minimise these effects by absorbing them with the use of efficient, well-fitting, cushioned boots or shoes and if required, absorbent insoles. The use of running shoes, basketball-type boots or good cross trainers is also essential as they are designed to cope with the types of forces experienced when bowling on hard surfaces.

*The year starting date of midnight on the previous 31st August is assumed throughout these Directives.*

1. **Junior Players in Open Age Group Cricket** – applies to training, nets and matches

• Making the step up from junior to open age group cricket is an important event in any player’s cricket experience. The player’s safety, personal development needs and overall cricket experience must be considered

• Clubs, squad coaches and managers must take into account the requirements on age detailed in this guidance.

• Each case must be determined on an individual basis, depending on the player’s ability and stage of cognitive and emotional maturity to take part in Open Age cricket The minimum age guidance provided below MUST be followed.

• Juniors should be involved 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

• 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

• The captain must inform the Umpires of under 18s in the side.

Restrictions - ECB Helmets, Fast Bowling Directives and Fielding Regulations should always be adhered to for junior players in Open age group cricket

Minimum age

Players who are selected in a County U12 squad (or Regional squad in Wales) 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 also eligible to play Open age cricket. This is providing they are at least 11 years old, are in School Year 7 on 1st September in the year preceding the season, and have written parental consent to play.

It is essential clubs and coaches recognise the ‘duty of care’ obligations they have towards young players in Open Age cricket

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 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.

1. **Girls Playing in Boys Age Group Leagues and Competitions**

The ECB wishes to encourage the development of girl cricketers and is happy for them to participate in boys' cricket

• Team managers and coaches have a duty of care to all players and girls should only be allowed to participate if the responsible adults are satisfied they are competent to do so

• Suitable arrangements need to be in place, particularly in relation to changing facilities and transportation arrangements, if applicable

• In ECB national competitions the age group requirements apply to all players regardless of their sex

• In local Leagues, and other competitions, it is up to each League, or competition, to specify age group requirements. If girls who are older than the specified age group are allowed to play, the League must specify a maximum age for the girl players and confirm how many older girls can play in any team. The same regulations must apply to all clubs in that League or competition

• For the sake of clarity it should be understood that boys cannot play in girls Leagues or competitions unless explicit provision for this is included in the rules of that League or competition. Boys cannot play in the ECB girls' competitions