

ECB Guidelines on Supervising children at cricket sessions

Clubs have asked for clarification on ratios when working with children and the following is applicable to all cricket.

It is important that clubs remember when planning cricket or general sessions for children that there must be sufficient adults present to adequately supervise all of the participants and manage any incident that may arise.

It is a basic requirement of all sessions and matches involving children that in all circumstances there will always be a minimum of two responsible adults present. Clubs should always plan accordingly and coaches must feel confident in raising concerns if they find themselves placed in a position where they have been expected to work alone and unsupervised. In matches there must always be at least 2 adults present and responsible for the team.

The ECB provides two different sets of ratios which relate to working with children and it is vital that 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 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 that there are sufficient adults 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.

Clubs must also factor in any further issues that the risk assessment of the facilities may have highlighted that are particular to that venue for example, changing rooms being located several minutes from the training venue and this may mean that clubs have to increase the number of supervisors in light of this additional information.

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

- 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. The

ECB has recently developed an introductory course for young leaders and coaching assistants called “Cricket Young Leaders Award”. Holders of this certificate must not be used in the calculations for supervision ratios as they are not over 18.

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

The tips below are therefore provided from the ECB’s Sports Science Home Study pack:

Coaches, Managers and Umpires are encouraged to:

- ensure that regular intervals for drinks are arranged, particularly in matches of more than twenty 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 when first read, but on hot days players can need up to 2 – 3 litres each to stay fully hydrated.)
- avoid waiting for children to say that they are thirsty before planning a drinks break as thirst is an indication of dehydration.

Further details regarding keeping players hydrated can be found in the Sports Science Home Study Pack of the ECB UKCC Level 2 Coaching Cricket Qualification.

Facilities and Venues used for children’s cricket

All Clubs must ensure that they have undertaken an adequate risk assessment on all of their facilities and venues that they use for any club activities regardless of ownership of that facility or venue. This does not include away match venues for leagues but should include, where possible, facilities

and venues that will be used on tours.

If clubs regularly hire facilities from other organisations e.g. schools or community colleges, there may be a generic risk assessment available for clubs to consider.

However it is important that clubs recognise that they are responsible for ensuring that venues and facilities are fit for purpose.

Details on risk assessment can be found in the ECB Clubmark programme at www.ecb.co.uk/clubmark

Outcomes of the risk assessments may have an impact on the session planning or co-ordination of junior club training or matches and so it is important that risk assessments are done ahead of use and are updated on an annual basis or if changes to the facility have taken place.