

# IOMCA GUIDELINES ON JUNIOR PLAYERS IN SENIOR CRICKET

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## General

- Making the step up from junior to open age group cricket is a significant event in any player's cricket experience. Ensure the player's safety, personal development needs and overall cricket experience are considered.
- Clubs, squad coaches and managers must take into account the requirements on age detailed in this guidance.
- Each case is to be determined on an individual basis, depending on the player's ability and stage of cognitive and emotional maturity to take part at this level – however, the minimum age guidance provided below must be adhered to.
- 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 should 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 IOMCA U12 squad in spring for a summer squad or in another squad deemed by IOMCA coaches to be of a standard for that season 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. In allowing these players to play in open age cricket it is essential clubs and coaches recognise the 'duty of care' obligations they have towards these young players.

This means boys and girls who are county squad and area squad players, are able to play open age group cricket if they are in an U12 age group and are a minimum of 11 years old on 1st September of the year preceding the season.

Club players who are not in an IOMCA squad must wait until they reach the U13 age group, be in Year 8 and be 12 years old on 1st September of the preceding year before being able to play in any open age group cricket. As before 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 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.