

ECB Guidelines on Appointing Appropriate Staff and Volunteers to work with Children

It is ECB Policy that all staff or volunteers in cricket who are working with children must go through an appropriate vetting process prior to appointment to ensure that all those in cricket working with Children are suitable to do so. Guidelines for clubs and leagues on how to implement this policy are detailed below.

The Club Welfare Officer

Every Club must identify and appoint a Club Welfare Officer who is responsible for advising the club on current best practice and implementing the various elements of “Safe Hands”. The Club Welfare Officer is there to assist clubs in creating a child centred environment at the club. The Club Welfare Officer is required to attend two separate training modules to support and equip them for the role.

The Club Welfare Officer must advise clubs on which roles within the club are likely to bring the post holders into regular and significant contact with children and as such may need further checks as part of the recruitment and appointment process. In this Kit Bag guidance there is a list of posts within a club and ECB guidance as to the likely need for a CRB Enhanced Disclosure. Ideally the Club Welfare Officer should have a significant role within the process for recruiting volunteers and staff to a club.

Guidelines on recruitment and selection of volunteers working with children

These Best Practice Guidelines were originally developed by the Football Association and have been amended by the ECB to provide clubs and leagues with advice and guidance on the recruitment and selection of volunteers working with children.

Any change to these guidelines will be notified via the ECB’s website and in any updates to “Safe Hands”. Please remember that the safety of children should be paramount in all your activities and these guidelines have been designed to help you in this.

The ECB is committed to providing a safe environment for children. By adopting the points outlined in this guideline you will be putting in place the best current practice to protect children whenever a volunteer is sought to work with them.

The majority of people involved in cricket working with children have only the best possible intentions. However, the ECB recognises its responsibilities to safeguard the welfare of all children participating in cricket by providing a safe and enjoyable environment. Sound recruitment and selection procedures will help to screen out those who are not suitable.

When clubs or leagues recruit new volunteers or paid staff all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. In addition, the volunteer selection processes used by a club or league must be consistent and fair at all times. This guidance outlines methods club or league officials can use to assist with their recruitment choices.

While it has a special emphasis on recruiting volunteers to work with children, it could easily be applied to recruitment of all volunteers as well as paid staff.

Planning

The first stage of any recruitment process involves planning. Club or league officials should draw up a profile, which highlights

the main areas of an identified voluntary role. They should also decide upon the skills and experience than an individual would need to fulfil the requirements of the role and draw up a person specification. Samples of job descriptions for a variety of club roles can be found on the ECB website.

A recruitment process must be developed in such a way that every applicant is treated in a fair and consistent manner.

Application Forms

Clubs and leagues should use application forms to collect information on each applicant. Each applicant's information is then collected, retained and stored in a consistent way.

More than one club or league official should look at the application forms to ensure that a fair and equitable scrutiny is completed. It is very important that clubs or leagues also ask for identification documents to confirm the identity of the applicant e.g. a passport or driving licence.

Meeting / Interview

It is highly recommended that club or league officials meet with all applicants prior to any recruitment decisions being made. More than one official should be present. The meeting/interview will enable the club or league to explore further the information provided in the application form. The questions to be asked should be prepared in advance and should provide the applicant with the opportunity to recount previous experiences and give examples of how they have handled, or would handle, situations.

Whilst it is important to elicit information regarding an applicant's technical capabilities that are relevant to the post, it is also necessary to explore attitudes and commitment to child welfare. Listed below are examples of questions that could be used to discover this information:

- Tell us about any previous experience you have working with children.
- Give a child-related scenario and ask the applicants what they would do e.g. 'It is a winter evening and the training session has finished. A parent has not arrived to pick up their child – what would you do?'
- Is there anything we should know that could affect your suitability to work with children? Have you ever been refused work with children?

References

At least two references should be requested from individuals who are not related to the applicant. One reference should be associated with the applicant's place of work and if possible, one that demonstrates the individual has been involved in sport, particularly children's cricket previously. Both references should contain a statement relating to the referee's awareness of the responsibilities of the post applied for. References should be followed up prior to any offer of appointment being made. If the references raise concerns, you are advised to contact the ECB Child Protection Team for advice and guidance (see Kit Bag Sample Reference Form).

Vetting Procedures including Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Enhanced Disclosures

A vetting procedure is very important in determining if someone is suitable to work with children. As such the CRB Disclosures are another tool in the recruitment procedure. The CRB Disclosure process should only be used when a person is appointed to a post within a club or league and that post, by reference to the job description and the nature of the job, will bring the person into regular, direct, personal and possibly individual contact with children. If an applicant is from outside the UK, or has

lived outside the UK within the last five years, then alternative vetting procedures may be required as detailed later in this section.

A CRB Enhanced Disclosure tells the ECB about a person's recorded offences and whether or not they are on one of the barred lists. It can indicate that a person is not a suitable person to work with children, for example, if they have a history of sexual offending. It may also tell the ECB that further investigations are required, for example, if the person has a history of drug dealing or racist offending.

Volunteers and others in Cricket should be assured that the ECB will take into account the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and only consider offences which are relevant to the care, supervision and training of children.

The ECB is not allowed to tell the Club or County Board about the actual offending and so applicants can be assured of confidentiality. The ECB will however tell the Club and County Board whether or not the person is considered suitable to work with children.

Applications for CRB Disclosures should be co-ordinated by the Club Welfare Officer.

It is vital for clubs to recognise that asking an individual to complete a CRB Disclosure application form is the first stage of the CRB Disclosure Process and that the outcome of the application must be sought from the County Cricket Development Manager, County Welfare Officer or the ECB Child Protection Team. It is possible for the CRB Disclosure Process to take several weeks. Clubs must ask applicants to complete a Self Declaration Form as an interim measure. The Self Declaration Form should be submitted to the Club Welfare Officer.

If an applicant claims to already have an ECB CRB Enhanced Disclosure the club

should seek advice from the County Cricket Development Manager, the County Welfare Officer or the ECB Child Protection Team on how to proceed.

Further information on the CRB Disclosure Process can be found by visiting the ECB website

Recruitment Decisions

Clubs should consider all the information they receive via the application form, confirmation of identity, the outcome of the take up of references as well as the outcome of the ECB CRB Enhanced Disclosure. This information should then be considered alongside the outcome of the meeting/interview to make an informed decision as to whether or not to accept the applicant into their club.

Post Recruitment

It is important that once a new volunteer has been recruited follow up action is taken, for example:

- Any qualifications should be substantiated, for example, requesting photocopies of coaching certificates
- That new volunteers are made aware of, and sign up to, the club's child protection policy and procedures, best practice guidelines and codes of conduct
- That any training needs are established and actioned
- A statement of the roles and responsibilities of the new volunteer is prepared
- Initially, a period of supervision/ observation or mentoring could be introduced to support the new volunteer.

Umpires and Scorers

Umpires and Scorers are usually organised through a regional or league appointment panel. However, where a Club is appointing

an Umpire and / or Scorer for their games involving children, it is responsibility of the club to check that the Umpire / Scorer:

- is qualified; is covered by relevant current insurance
- is a member of the ECB Officials Association or the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers
- has been through an appropriate recruitment process
- has been through the CRB Disclosure Process with the ECB to check his/her suitability to work with children in cricket
- agrees to abide by the Code of Conduct for Members and Guests whilst umpiring / scoring

Overseas Criminal Record Checks

Clubs must recognise that checks will need to be undertaken on post holders regardless of their nationality. Different countries have varying methods for providing background checks and not all countries are able to provide this service. The CRB website provides current advice on which countries are able to provide a check and the applicable procedure. The ECB Child Protection Team is also able to provide some guidance on other countries. Overseas checks must also be undertaken on British passport holders who have lived abroad in the past 5 years. This Kit Bag has an ECB Overseas Clearance Form which must accompany any overseas check submitted to the ECB. Overseas checks must normally be organised before the individual arrives in the UK whenever possible.

Background checks are undertaken on any individual who works, either in a paid or volunteer capacity, with children.

It is important to note that overseas checks are done purely for the role being undertaken by the individual. Some overseas players will be checked as they are actually on a work permit that entitles them to be coaching in this country during the season and the club will be expecting them to run coaching clinics.