Hadleigh and Thundersley Cricket Club – Youth Policy Document



Reviewed by Management Committee in May 2026

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Club Officials and Contact Details

The Club Safeguarding Officer(s) are the first point of contact for all club child safeguarding issues. If you have a concern about how a child's well-being or a member's conduct towards a child you should pass this on at the earliest opportunity. Should any safeguarding issues arise they work with the County Safeguarding Officer to ensure the concerns handled correctly.

Youth Manager	Alex Gilbert	07469246715
Club Safeguarding Officer	Alastair Graham	07881916622

Any questions about youth policies should be directed to the Club Safeguarding Officers. Hadleigh and Thundersley Cricket Club follows the ECB "Safe Hands" Policy. The policies in this document have been formed from this ECB guidance.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

Our club is committed to ensuring everyone participating in cricket does so in a safe, friendly, secure, and enjoyable environment. Everyone at the club, whether as a player, coach, official, administrator, staff member, volunteer, spectator, parent, or carer has a role to play. Individually and collectively, it is our actions, both on and off the field which can help create a positive and inclusive culture.

We will do this by:

- Having the right people in place
- Creating the right culture and environment
- Ensuring clear processes are in place for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns
- Adopting the ECB's Safe Hands Policy and Guidance

Having the Right People in Place

Whilst everyone at our club has a responsibility for Safeguarding, we also have a designated Club Safeguarding Officer who has completed specialist Safe Hands training provided by the ECB.

The Club Safeguarding Officer role is:

- The first point of contact for all children, parents/carers volunteers, and members at the Club
- Responsible for ensuring that everyone who is working with children at the Club is subject to appropriate safer recruitment processes
- A member of our committee
- A source of safeguarding advice for the Club, its committee, and members
- The Club's main point of contact for the County Safeguarding Officer, the ECB Safeguarding Team and other external safeguarding agencies
- The person responsible for ensuring correct and comprehensive reporting procedures exist for raising and managing safeguarding concerns.

Creating the Right Culture and Environment

All participants in cricket, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, ability of disability, have the right to enjoy the game in an environment that is safe from abuse of any kind. The Club recognises that safeguarding starts with setting high standards and promoting a positive culture which provides the best environment for participants to enjoy themselves and the game of cricket.

Anyone in a specialist role within the Club may also be required to complete the **Safeguarding for Specialist Roles training** with the relevant additional module. This includes Captains and Team Managers, Coaches and Activators, Officials (Umpires and Scorers) and Committee Members.

- We encourage all of our members to complete **the ECB online Safeguarding Induction**
- We ensure that all individuals working at or for the Club are provided with the

necessary support through education, training and continued professional development (CPD)

- We ensure that all individuals working at or for the Club are recruited and appointed in accordance with ECB Safer Recruitment guidance and relevant legislation and are committed to providing a welcoming, safe, and fun experience for children
- We promote a listening culture where the views of children, parents/carers, volunteers and other club members are proactively sought and acted upon. This helps us to create an environment where people have the opportunity and confidence to raise concerns, including concerns about poor practice, abuse and neglect
- We seek to create a partnership with parents/carers so that they know what to expect from us and what we expect of them
- We ensure that external organisations who are delivering services on behalf of the Club have safeguarding measures in place which meet the requirements of Safe Hands.

Reporting and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

It is our aim that everyone at the Club should feel confident to raise a concern, no matter how small. We believe that raising and dealing with concerns quickly, when they occur, supports a proactive safeguarding culture at the Club.

All concerns and allegations will be taken seriously. We will follow the 3R's with every concern: **Responding** appropriately, **Recording** confidentiality and **Reporting** where necessary, ensuring that concerns are dealt with in a fair and prompt manner.

The Club recognises that it is not the responsibility of club members to determine or investigate if abuse has taken place, but to act upon and report any concerns promptly.

We ensure that confidential information relating to safeguarding matters is shared appropriately and only with those who need to know. Information may need to be shared with the County Safeguarding Officer, Cricket Regulator Safeguarding Team, or local agencies with statutory responsibility for safeguarding. If we are unsure, we will seek advice from our County Safeguarding Officer.

Adopting the ECB's Safe Hands Policy and Guidance

- The Club has formally adopted the ECB's Safe Hands Policy and guidance as part of our constitution
- The Club works within the ECB Safeguarding Procedure for the management of safeguarding investigations
- We ensure that all individuals who work and volunteer at or for our Club understand how Safe Hands applies to them.

Club Commitment

We are committed to this Safeguarding Policy Statement and will review it annually.

Youth Player Standards of Behaviour

All club members are expected to show high standards of behaviour set out in the Code of Conduct in the club rules, and youth players in particular should:

- Show respect and listen to their coach, their team members, other members of the club, their opposition at matches and any spectators;
- Not treat anyone differently because of their age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or their family background;
- Support everyone in their team, and encourage each other to try their best at matches and training by setting a positive example, even if the team does not win;
- Play fairly in matches and at training, and respect the decisions of umpires;
- Use appropriate language at all times when talking to other youth players, coaches, and other people involved with cricket. This includes avoiding themes and behaviours which may cause offence or distress to others;
- Not play games with a hard cricket ball without protective equipment or do anything that may cause harm to themselves or someone else.

The club asks parents and guardians to talk to their child about their behaviour when playing cricket so all youth players have a positive experience at matches and training. Possible topics to discuss with children are:

- Why do they come to the club and what do they want to get from attending – for example, to have fun, to learn how to play, to take part in matches, to be with their friends, to keep fit?
- How do they want to treat, and be treated, by adults – for example, officials, adult members of the club and spectators?
- How do they want to treat, and be treated by, other children at the club?
- How do they want to be able to raise any concerns they have?
- What rules, or limits, do they think there should be?
- How do they think any breaches of the code of conduct should be dealt with?

Expectations of Club Officials and Volunteers

Club officials and volunteers assisting youth cricket should, in addition to adhering to the club's Code of Conduct:

- Have undertaken a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced check;
- Hold relevant qualifications and be covered by appropriate insurance where they are responsible for youth training nights;
- Always work in an open environment (i.e. avoid private, or unobserved, situations and encourage an open environment). This includes the online world – club officers and volunteers are actively discouraged from online or other electronic communication with children – any such communication should be via parents – unless permission has been otherwise given;
- Inform players and parents of the requirements of cricket;
- Know and understand the ECB's "Safe Hands – Cricket's Policy for Safeguarding Children";
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with young players, based on mutual trust and respect;
- Ensure physical contact is appropriate and necessary and is carried out within recommended guidelines with the young player's full consent and approval;
- Not engage in any form of sexually related contact with a young player. This is strictly forbidden, as is sexual innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms. The ECB adopts the Home Office guidelines. These recommend that "people in positions of trust and authority do not have sexual relationships with 16-17 year olds in their care";
- Attend appropriate training to keep up to date with their role, especially with respect to the safeguarding of children.

Where parents of children are concerned that club officials or volunteers are not meeting the above expectations, they should speak to their child's youth coach or the Club Safeguarding Officer(s) at the earliest opportunity. Where there is a concern that any child is at risk or has been treated inappropriately by a club official or volunteer, the Club Safeguarding Officer(s) should be contacted immediately.

Anti-Bullying Policy

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our children so they can train, and play, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all children should be able to report it, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows bullying is happening is expected to tell someone who can do something about it.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying can cause physical pain and/or psychological distress to the victim.

Bullying can take many forms:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (for example: hiding kit, or making threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti and/or gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours and teasing
- Cyber: bullying behaviour online or via electronic communication (email, text, social media etc.) Misuse of associated technology, such as camera and video facilities

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate, by signs or behaviour, that they being bullied. Adults should be aware of signs and investigate if a child:

- Says they are being bullied, is unwilling to go to the club or becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence; or
- Has possessions which are damaged or go missing, has unexplained cuts or bruises, asks for money or starts stealing money or is frightened to say what's wrong.

Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to the Club Safeguarding Officer
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be reported to the ECB Safeguarding Team for advice via the County Safeguarding Officer
- Parents should be informed and invited to a meeting to discuss the problem. If necessary, and appropriate, police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

In cases of adults reported to be bullying cricketers under 18, the ECB must always be informed, and will advise on action to be taken.

Inclusion & Diversity Policy

Hadleigh & Thundersley Cricket Club in all its activities, is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity in cricket, and to ensuring that its employees, members and all other individuals working or volunteering for H&TCC, and participating in or watching H&TCC's activities are treated fairly and are able to conduct their activities free from discrimination, harassment or intimidation.

- H&TCC, in all its activities will not discriminate, or in any way treat anyone less favourably on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, parental or marital status, pregnancy, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

- H&TCC will not tolerate harassment, bullying, abuse or victimisation of individuals.

- H&TCC will endeavour to create access and opportunities for all those individuals who wish to participate, and are lawfully eligible to participate, in its activities.

- H&TCC will ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that its employees, members and volunteers adhere to these requirements and this policy.

- This policy is fully supported by the H&TCC's officers and members of the Management Committee who are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Disciplinary Policies Concerning Youth Players

If disciplinary proceedings are undertaken where an under-18 is a witness, alleged victim or alleged offender, the processes that are followed must pay due consideration to safeguarding and welfare issues. No part of the processes should be oppressive or intimidating for the young person.

Should a formal complaint be made against any youth player, the Chairman shall notify the Club Safeguarding Officer(s), one of whom shall advise the child and their parents of the procedures, and shall attend any hearing to ensure it follows this policy. The County Safeguarding Officer should be informed if a youth player is involved in any disciplinary proceedings.

Any disciplinary panel should consider whether they need the child to attend in person and may discuss this with the County Safeguarding Officer. When making this decision consideration should be given to:

- the age of the child and the possible effect on the child
- the seriousness of the offence and the evidence likely to be given;

Parents should be included in any invitation. If a child does not wish to attend they cannot be compelled to do so. If the child chooses to give a statement to the panel then ordinarily that statement should be prepared in advance in written format. This can be written by the child or any other person. It is important that this statement is the child's views and words.

If, when attending the disciplinary panel, the child is to be questioned regarding their behaviour or what they have witnessed, all involved should bear in mind the age and potential vulnerability of the child in such a setting. Questioning should be conducted in a considerate manner, and must not be oppressive, persistent, lengthy or demeaning. The Club Safeguarding Officer or appointed Safeguarding Chaperone should ask the Chair of the panel to suspend proceedings immediately if they have any concerns about the manner or duration of questioning.

Where a child is found to have committed a disciplinary offence requiring potential sanction, consideration should be given to the child's age and understanding, as well as their experience of life and of cricket, before any sanctions are issued.

Where it is necessary for a report to be circulated (either within the relevant cricket league or even to the press), any individual under 18 years of age must not have their details published.

Transport and Collection Policy

Parents and guardians are responsible for the safe delivery and collection of their child for matches or training. Parents and guardians should inform the coach or captain for the training session or match if another person has agreed to do this on their behalf, and provide sufficient details to help them identify who this individual is.

Coaches, club officials and volunteers will be responsible for children in their care when on the club premises or on arrival at opponents' cricket grounds. All reasonable efforts to ensure the child will be safe in the care of the person collecting the child should be made before the child can be collected.

In the event that a child is not collected on time, a coach or club official, preferably having undertaken an enhanced DBS check, should wait with the child and use the details provided on the youth player's membership form to contact their parent or guardian. Should this occur at Hadleigh & Thundersley Cricket Club, they should continue to wait as long as is required to ensure the safety of the child. At an opposition ground or an alternative venue, were the child to not be collected and contact could not be made with their parents or guardians for over an hour they may transport the child back to Hadleigh & Thundersley Cricket Club and wait with them there, should they believe it to be safer to do so. The Club Safeguarding Officer(s) should be notified in all cases where a child has waited for half an hour or longer for collection or if there are repeated instances of late collection.

It is not the responsibility of the coach or team manager to transport, or arrange to transport, the children to and from the club or match. In the event that a parent or guardian cannot arrange the delivery or collection of their child, they may request that the coach or captain responsible for the training or match arranges this for them. There is no obligation for a club official or volunteer to offer to do this, but if they do transport, or arrange for the child to be transported, the parents and guardians take responsibility for this decision. Any member transporting or arranging the transport of a youth member shall take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being.

If any member has a question or concern about this policy or that it has not been followed, they should speak to the Club Safeguarding Officer(s).

Changing and Showering Policy

These guidelines apply to the arrangements to be made for adults and children using changing facilities. These are based on the policy of the England and Wales Cricket Board.

Best practice principles to be adopted wherever possible, are as follows:

- Adults must not change or shower at the same time, using the same facility as children - if the same changing room is used then they must have different times
- If adults and children need to share a changing facility, they must do so at different times.
- Mixed gender teams must have access to separate male and female changing rooms
- Due to the risks of inappropriate photography or filming, mobile phones must not be used in changing rooms

If children are uncomfortable changing or showering at the club, no pressure should be placed on them to do so. The club encourages the following steps by parents, guardians or players who are concerned by changing and showering arrangements at training or at matches:

- Youth players can arrive wearing cricket whites or appropriate training clothes to matches and training respectively
- Youth players can leave games wearing the same clothing to avoid the need to change, and can shower upon returning home
- Where a youth player does need to change, they should be encouraged to do before or after adults begin changing or change at the same time, but in a different changing room or alone in another private location, especially where the team is mixed gender
- Where a youth player needs to shower after training or a match, they should do so before or after adults start showering and changing
- Members should contact the Club Safeguarding Officer(s) where there are any concerns about this policy, how it is applied or has been applied by a club official or volunteer

At matches, the team captain is responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are followed, unless they are under 18 years of age in which case the most senior adult shall be responsible, preferably having undertaken an enhanced DBS check.

While youth players are changing and showering, they shall do so unsupervised and the adult responsible is not liable for any accident or injury during this time. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as where they reasonably believe may be a risk of harm to a child or a medical emergency, should an adult enter the changing or showering facilities.

Photography, Filming and Social Media Broadcast Policy

Parents and guardians should not be prevented from taking pictures of, or filming, their children. These are normal family practices and help mark milestones in a child's life. The introduction of proportionate controls on the use of photographic equipment (cameras, and videos, including mobile phones) is part of general safeguarding good practice in a club.

The club expects the following principles to be observed by members:

- Before taking photographs or videos, prior permission of parents and guardians should be obtained before either are taken
- Youth players should be informed a person will be taking photographs or videos, and that if they have any concerns they can report these to their coach or another responsible adult
- Concerns regarding inappropriate, or intrusive, photography or videos should be reported to the Club Safeguarding Officer(s) and recorded in the same manner as any other child protection or safeguarding concern

Training, Matches and Tournaments

- Parents and guardians may take photographs and videos at training, matches or tournaments if they have spoken to the coach, captain or the responsible adult about this before doing so. These club officials and volunteers will advise on what is appropriate and consistent with this policy, and their instructions should be followed
- The club supports the use of video recording as an effective coaching technique, provided that the youth player and their parent or guardian has given consent to this. Any videos or photographs taken for this purpose should be deleted immediately following the session, unless otherwise agreed with the parent or guardian

Sharing Photographs and Videos

- Before a photograph or video is shared on social media or through any other medium, the permission of parents and guardians should be obtained. They should be given an opportunity to view the photograph or video before it is shared. Where permission is not given, the youth player should not be identifiable in the shared photograph or video
- Where photographs or videos are shared, this should appear without accompanying names to ensure the privacy and safety of the youth players

ECB Helmet Policy, Fielding Regulations and Fast Bowling Directives

Protective Equipment and Helmet Requirement

All youth players up to the age of 18, both in open age group cricket and in all junior cricket played with a hard cricket ball, including practice sessions, shall wear a helmet while batting and wicket-keeping. Any individual taking responsibility for players should take all reasonable steps to ensure this guidance is followed at all times.

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).

ECB Fielding Regulations for Players aged under 18

These Regulations apply in both hard and soft ball cricket.

Players fielding behind the wicket on the off side are not required to comply with the minimum distances or protective equipment requirements.

Where 'age' is referred to (e.g. in the table below), it means the player's age on the day of the match.

Age	Minimum fielding distance from striking batter
9 and below	11 yards (10 metres)
10 to 13	11 yards (10 metres)
14 to 15	8 yards (7.3 metres)
16 to 17	None but protective equipment mandatory if within 8 yards (7.3 metres)
18+	None but protective equipment advised

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.

Protective equipment: fielding within 8 yards (7.3m) from the striking batter must wear a helmet with a faceguard or grille and any such player who is male (irrespective of gender) must also wear a groin protector (box).

Fast Bowling Directives

The ECB Fast Bowling Regulations (updated for 2025) will apply to all matches:

Age	Maximum overs per spell	Maximum overs per day
11 and below	**4 overs per spell**	**8 overs per day**
12 & 13	**5 overs per spell**	**10 overs per day**
14 & 15	**5 overs per spell**	**12 overs per day**
16 & 17	**6 overs per spell**	**15 overs per day**
18 & 19	**7 overs per spell**	**18 overs per day**

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. 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 according to the ECB.

For practice sessions these are:

Age of Player	Max. Overs per Spell	Max Sessions per Week
U13	30 balls per session	2 sessions per week
U14-15	36 balls per session	2 sessions per week
U16-17	36 balls per session	3 sessions per week
U18-19	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 they bowl the next over he legally can from the other end. If this does not happen their 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 their 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 they cannot exceed the maximum number of overs per day for their age group even if they subsequently bowl spin. They 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 their spell have been bowled from the same end. If they bowl spin without exceeding the maximum number of overs in a spell the maximum will apply as soon as they revert to bowling fast.

Youth Players in Open Age Cricket Policy

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

Hadleigh and Thundersley believes that youth players should be involved in all aspects of the game wherever possible i.e. socialising, team talks, practice, and so on, so they feel part of the team. We encourage captains and adult players to be supportive of young players at all times, providing praise and encouragement.

Availability and Selection

A child's parent or guardian must give written permission for them to play in open age cricket. Selectors should contact parents directly to obtain this, and should only contact the youth player through digital channels directly if their parent or guardian has permitted them to do so. Parents or guardians may ask that they are copied into all communications with the youth player.

We recognise that young players will often feel more comfortable and able to perform if they have a family member or friend also playing in the side, and we will try to accommodate this.

Minimum Age

The ECB changed their policy in March 2025 regarding the age when a child can start playing in open age cricket. Essex Cricket have now implemented this policy so the regulations around when a child can play now are:

Junior cricketers are eligible to play open age cricket from their 12thbirthday, subject to written parental consent.

Duty of Care

The team captain has a duty of care to youth players and should not:

- 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
- 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

Captains should ensure they have the medical information and contact details of parents and guardians of youth players they are responsible for.

Hadleigh & Thundersley Cricket Club Incident and Accident Report Form

Site where incident/accident took place:

……

Name of person in charge of session/match/competition:

……

Name of injured person:

……..

Address of injured person:

……

…….. Tel:……

Date and time of incident/accident:

Date…… Time:……

Give details of how and precisely where the incident/accident took place. Describe what activity was taking place e.g. training game, club match/competition, changing etc.

……..

……..

Give full details of the action taken, including any first aid treatment and the name(s) of the First Aider(s):

……

Hadleigh & Thundersley Cricket Club Incident and Accident Report Form (Continued)

Were any of the following contacted? (Circle or highlight as appropriate)

Police	Yes	No
Ambulance	Yes	No
Parent/Carer	Yes	No

What happened to the injured person following the incident/accident? (e.g. went home, went to hospital, carried on with the session etc)

……..

……..

If sent to hospital, which local hospital received the injured person?

……

All the above facts are a true and accurate record of the incident/accident. Where this is being completed for a child, the Club Safeguarding Officer should be notified immediately and sent a copy of this form.

Signed:…… Date:…….

Name (Block Capitals, please)

……

Missing Child Policy

In the unlikely event that a child go missing when under the care of a club coach, captain, official or volunteer the most senior club official present should be notified, and they should:

• Ensure other children in their care are looked after appropriately while a search for the child concerned is organised

• Inform the child's parents, if they are present at the event, or nominate an appropriate person to telephone them and advise of the concern. The parent or guardian should be reassured that everything that can be done to locate their child is taking place

• Organise all available responsible adults by areas to be searched. It is best to take a short time to organise the search properly so that all places are searched fully

• Send searchers immediately to any exits to the venue to ensure the child has not left, and to any obvious potential danger spots such as nearby lakes or rivers.

• Search the area in which the child has gone missing including changing rooms, toilets, public and private areas and the club's grounds

• Request all those searching to report back to a nominated adult at a specific point

• This nominated person should remain at this reference point and make a note of events, including a detailed physical description of the child. This should include approximate height, build, hair and eye colour as well as the clothing the child was wearing and where and when they were last seen. All this will be required by the police. If the search is unsuccessful the responsible adult should then contact the police

• A report should go to the police no later than 20 minutes after the child's disappearance is noted, even if the search is not complete

• If the police recommend further action before they get involved, follow their guidance, and, always be guided by them in any further actions to take.

• At any stage when the child is located, ensure you inform all adults involved including the parents, searchers and the police if, by then, they are involved

• All missing child incidents must be notified at the very earliest opportunity to the Club Safeguarding Officer, who must immediately notify the County Safeguarding Officer, and they must then notify the ECB Safeguarding Team