



**Safe  
Hands**



# **ECB Safe Hands Policy 2026**

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# ECB SAFE HANDS POLICY 2026

## Foreword ECB Board

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do in cricket. Our commitment is to ensure the game is safe, welcoming, inclusive, and enjoyable for everyone. This policy reflects our shared responsibility to create environments where all participants can thrive.

This policy sets out clear expectations, processes, and commitments. It is supported by a dedicated safeguarding network across England and Wales, including County and Club Safeguarding Officers along with national resources within the Cricket Regulator providing leadership and expertise. Together we work to prevent harm, respond effectively to concerns, and continually improve our approach through insight and collaboration.

We recognise that safeguarding is an ongoing and evolving commitment. We will continue to listen, learn, and adapt, ensuring that barriers to reporting are removed and that every voice is heard. By working in partnership with Recreational Cricket Boards (RCBs), Professional County Clubs (PCCs), clubs, volunteers, charities, and individuals, we can build a culture of trust and vigilance that protects the integrity of our sport and the wellbeing of all who play it.

## Sara Niblock – Director of Operations, Cricket Regulator

The Cricket Regulator, established in December 2023, is responsible for ensuring compliance with cricket's regulations and promoting integrity and fairness across the game. Safeguarding is central to this mission, and extends beyond compliance to create safe, welcoming and inclusive environments at every level. We focus on prevention, strong processes for managing concerns and continuous improvement whilst working alongside the ECB's strategies to make cricket safe, enjoyable, and respectful for all. Our vision is to be a trusted regulator in sport, ensuring everyone involved in cricket feels protected and valued.

Effective safeguarding requires strong, positive leadership and robust governance from all those in leadership roles across cricket.

The successful implementation of our safeguarding policy and guidance depends on inspiring, driven leadership to champion their importance and accelerate their purpose.

The Cricket Regulator is committed to ensuring:

- Implementation of ECB policies, guidance, education, standards, and structures to create safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for both children and adults
- Our policies and guidance are aligned with current legislation and statutory requirements, developed in collaboration with statutory agencies and relevant government departments. There are clear and accessible systems which support the prompt reporting of safeguarding concerns
- Safeguarding concerns are investigated proportionately and appropriately, in a timely manner in consultation with statutory agencies
- Our approach to risks and development of practice is continuously reviewed and developed

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility, but certain individuals across the Cricket Regulator, the ECB, RCBs, PCCs, and other cricket organisations carry additional duties in embedding the Safe Hands Policy. Their role is to work closely with stakeholders to ensure the right structures, guidance, and resources are in place so that safeguarding is consistently understood and effectively implemented across the cricket network.





## Our Commitment

Cricket is a game that brings communities together and can positively impact lives. Across England and Wales, cricket offers enjoyment, inclusion and physical and mental health benefits for children and adults. Our goal is to use the power of cricket to benefit everyone and inspire a generation to say cricket is a game for me! Cricket is a game for all. Everyone involved, players, coaches, officials, administrators, staff, volunteers, spectators, parents, and carers, has a role to play. Together, our actions on and off the field help create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive culture.

Safeguarding means taking action to promote wellbeing and protect participants from harm. It is our shared responsibility to uphold their right to live free from abuse. This commitment is not just for today but for the future. We all play a part in embedding safeguarding into cricket organisations.

The ECB's vision is that every individual and club has the resources and confidence to create a supportive environment where participants can thrive. A safe, welcoming, inclusive, and diverse culture is at the heart of this vision.

## Our Policy

This overarching policy has been developed to ensure the safeguarding of children and adults within cricket. It is a mandatory requirement under the County Partnership Agreement that all PCCs, RCBs and affiliated clubs adopt and implement the ECB Safe Hands Policy. Having a strong safeguarding policy is the first step to ensuring children and adults in cricket are safe; However, a policy alone will not achieve this.

We will equip the cricket network to access the appropriate resources and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

These responsibilities have been broken down to Having the Right People in Place, Creating the Right Culture and Environment and Sharing and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns. Children are the future of our sport, so it is vital that they experience cricket in a safe, friendly, secure, and enjoyable environment. The safety of all children and adults participating in cricket is of paramount importance.

This policy outlines the standards and expectations for players, coaches, officials, volunteers, spectators, parents, and carers, ensuring they understand what they can expect from us and what we expect from them.

Everyone shares responsibility for creating a positive culture where children feel safe and listened to. All PCCs, RCBs and clubs must adopt Safe Hands and implement robust safeguarding measures. This position is a mandatory requirement under the County Partnership Agreement (CPA) with the ECB. Concerns must be taken seriously and responded to promptly in line with ECB guidance and statutory requirements. By embedding safeguarding leadership, culture, and practice, we aim to ensure cricket remains a safe and enjoyable experience for every child.

## Listening to children

Listening to children is the foundation of a child centered approach. This means seeking, listening to, and considering children's wishes and feelings both in individual decisions and in wider decisions about delivery.

We promote a listening culture in which the views of children and their parents/carers are proactively sought and acted upon.

Recognising additional vulnerability and taking this into consideration is central to creating inclusive and safe environments.





## SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

The ECB is committed to protecting adults from abuse, neglect, and harm. This commitment applies to all adults involved in cricket activities and promotes dignity, respect, and empowerment for everyone within the game. Safeguarding adults means supporting their right to live safely, preventing harm wherever possible, and enabling them to make informed choices about their lives.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All concerns are to be taken seriously and reported promptly in line with ECB procedures. The policy is guided by principles of zero tolerance for abuse, inclusivity, and partnership with statutory agencies and is committed to complying with the procedures of Local and Regional Safeguarding Adults Boards. By following these principles, we aim to create a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where adults can enjoy cricket free from harm.

Some adults may have additional vulnerabilities. This may be on a permanent or temporary basis. In England and Wales legislation states 'an adult at risk' is anyone aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect and cannot protect themselves from harm because of those needs.

## HAVING THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN PLACE

### Our game and our leaders

Effective safeguarding requires strong, positive leadership and robust governance from all those in leadership roles across cricket. The successful implementation of our safeguarding policy and any additional safeguarding guidance produced by the ECB or the Cricket Regulator depends on inspiring, driven leadership to champion their importance and accelerate their purpose.

While safeguarding is a shared responsibility, specific individuals across the Cricket Regulator, the ECB, and the game hold additional responsibility for embedding our Safe Hands Policy.

### Club Safeguarding Officers

While safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, Club Safeguarding Officers play a central role in creating an environment that is safe, welcoming, and friendly for children. They are the designated lead for safeguarding within their club and should be a member of the club's committee.

The Club Safeguarding Officer will undertake specialised Safe Hands training to ensure that they are able to fulfil their role. They are the first point of contact for anyone within the club who has a safeguarding concern. They are responsible for ensuring that the correct policies and guidance are followed, and they are responsible for ensuring that everyone who is working with children in their club is subject to appropriate safer recruitment processes.

### County Safeguarding Officers

Each RCB and PCC must appoint a County Safeguarding Officer. Their role is to promote safeguarding across clubs, leagues, and other organisations within the county, and to provide advice and support on safeguarding matters.

Club Safeguarding Officers will receive the contact details for their County Safeguarding Officer as part of their county's safeguarding training programme. County Safeguarding Officers can also be contacted directly through their RCB or PCC.





## Board Safeguarding Leads

Each RCB and PCC must appoint a Board Safeguarding Lead. The Board Safeguarding Lead (BSL) plays a critical role as an active Board member, championing the safeguarding of everyone involved in cricket. This position is a mandatory requirement under the County Partnership Agreement (CPA) with the ECB.

Recruitment for this role follows a safer recruitment process, ensuring that the appointed individual either possesses, or acquires through training, the knowledge, skills, and expertise necessary to lead safeguarding efforts and promote the Board's commitment to this priority. The BSL acts as a key conduit, ensuring regular and robust oversight of all safeguarding matters. This includes facilitating consistent reporting from the County Safeguarding Officer, integrating safeguarding into the Board's risk register, and ensuring safeguarding remains a standing agenda item at Board meetings. While the BSL provides leadership in this area, safeguarding remains a collective responsibility of the entire Board.

## Safeguarding Provision

The Cricket Regulator is the central safeguarding resource that embeds consistent and effective safeguarding across the cricket network striving to make cricket safe, welcoming and inclusive for everyone. The Cricket Regulator is structured across 3 business functions:

- Education and Support - our proactive response focusing on culture, prevention and guidance
- Investigation and Casework - our reactive response addresses concerns as they arise through independent investigations, only when the safeguarding threshold is met and a child or an adult identified as 'at risk' is involved, in line with England and Wales legislation and where transferable risk has been identified
- Strategy, Performance, and Operations - drives the strategic and analytical approach to assess risks, provide performance data and operational processes, ensuring decisions are evidence based.

## CREATING THE RIGHT CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

All participants within cricket have the right to enjoy the game in an environment that is safe from abuse of any kind, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity status, race, religion/beliefs, sex, and sexual orientation. We recognise that appropriate safeguarding is not just about preventing abuse but setting high standards and promoting a positive culture which provides the best environment for everyone to enjoy themselves and the game of cricket. Within the Safeguarding kit bag we provide a range of guidance to promote safe, welcoming and inclusive environments.

All clubs and other bodies who wish to seek our support, whether financial or otherwise (for example, developing facilities and/or opportunities to play cricket), must adopt and implement the Safe Hands Policy and guidance.

If an external organisation is commissioned by a club, it is the club's responsibility to ensure that the external organisation has safeguarding measures in place which meet the requirements of the ECB Safe Hands policy 2026.

## Safer Recruitment

We are committed to ensuring that all relevant posts across cricket are subject to robust safer recruitment processes.

We will support national training initiatives and programmes to help all participants understand their safeguarding responsibilities. RCBs, PCCs and other organisations who are funded by the ECB are expected to support the implementation and delivery of this training at every level of the game, in line with ECB County Partnership Agreement requirements.

A range of codes of conduct are available for different participants to ensure that everyone is clear regarding expectations of behaviour and the game supports a culture in which any departure from these expectations is quickly and robustly addressed.





## SHARING AND RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Creating an environment where the views of children, adults, and those who support them are actively encouraged and genuinely heard, helping to build a culture in which everyone feels comfortable speaking up when something worries them. Our shared aim is for every participant in cricket to feel confident raising a concern, no matter how small. Responding to concerns promptly and effectively is fundamental to a proactive safeguarding culture and plays a vital role in keeping everyone safe.

We work with the network of Club and County Safeguarding Officers to ensure that all concerns, including low-level concerns, are taken seriously and managed effectively at club, county or national level within expected timescales. We also work alongside our statutory partners to manage concerns when appropriate.

We recognise the responsibility of statutory agencies and work within safeguarding procedures as detailed by current legislation and statutory guidance.

We will ensure that everyone involved in cricket has access to training and guidance on recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns, including the identification of potential abuse. Those working in cricket are not expected to determine whether abuse has occurred; their responsibility is to act on any concerns and report them promptly.

The ECB Safeguarding Regulations detail how safeguarding investigations are managed by the Investigation and Casework team within the Cricket Regulator. The regulations include the role of the Independent Cricket Safeguarding Panel in making decisions on safeguarding investigations.

The ECB and each cricket organisation also has a whistleblowing procedure for staff and volunteers to follow if they feel that their safeguarding concerns are not being adequately addressed within their organisation.

## OUR SAFEGUARDING KIT BAG

Cricket, in some forms, can be an open age and open gender sport. This can sometimes create safeguarding challenges. The Safe Hands Kit Bag, which accompanies this policy, provides comprehensive guidance and templates relating to a range of cricket-specific issues. This has been developed in consultation with individuals, clubs, and counties across the cricket network to provide day-to-day support in safeguarding individuals.

That guidance and this policy together form the ECB's Safe Hands Policy.

## USEFUL LINKS

[ECB Safeguarding Strategy](#)

[The Cricket Regulator Strategy](#)

[Kit Bag](#)

[Safeguarding Regulations](#)

[County Cricket Boards](#)

[Safer Recruitment Processes](#)

### **Safeguarding Adults:**

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/>

<https://www.safeguarding.wales/en/adu-i>

[Safeguarding adults at risk of abuse or neglect | GOV.WALES](#)