



A companion guide to your Quick-Reference Card

1. Introduction

The England & Wales Cricket Boards (ECB) Safe Hands Policy opens with an aspiration worth reading twice: *"Cricket is a game which unites communities and improves lives."* That is not a throwaway line. It is the reason safeguarding matters -- because cricket only unites communities when everyone in those communities feels safe.

Whether you are captain, vice-captain, coach, umpire or team manager at Binfield, the moment you are in one of these roles you carry a genuine responsibility for Safeguarding.

The ECB is clear: anyone working with children must be *"aware that they are in a position of responsibility and is mindful of this in all interactions"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance).

This guide explains the thinking behind the rules on your Quick-Reference card. It walks through real scenarios, acknowledges the grey areas, and shows you what the system looks like from your side -- including what happens after you report a concern, and why reporting your own mistakes is the smartest thing you can do.

Please read this carefully and keep it along with the Quick-Reference card to hand for match days. It now cross-references this guide by section number, so if a bullet point on the card raises a question, you can look up the scenario and explanation here. Between them, you will be covered.

2. Why These Rules Exist -- And Why They Protect You

Every safeguarding rule in cricket shares the same structural logic: it removes the opportunity for innocent behaviour to be misunderstood.

The ECB's Staff and Volunteers Guidance uses a specific word for this -- *"misconstrued"*. Rules exist to *"reduce the risk that behaviour will be misconstrued"*. The guidance is not assuming you will do something wrong. It is acknowledging that perfectly normal behaviour -- giving a child a lift, sending a quick text, helping a youngster with their kit -- can look very different when described second-hand, out of context, weeks later.

The ECB uses the term "**position of responsibility**" to describe your role -- distinct from the legal term "position of trust" in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 -- but the principle is the same: when you are captain, coach, or vice-captain, the dynamic between you and a junior player is not the same as between two teammates. You have authority, and that authority comes with an obligation to maintain boundaries -- not because you are suspected of anything, but because boundaries make the environment safe for everyone, including you.

If you follow the guidelines, nobody can credibly misinterpret your behaviour. The rules are not restrictions -- they are armour.

One more thing worth knowing: the ECB's Safeguarding Regulations (Regulation 2.3) state that safeguarding concerns must be shared "*at the earliest possible opportunity and in any event within one working day*". A failure to share concerns may itself be considered a breach. This is not designed to frighten you. It is designed to ensure that when something feels wrong, the system responds quickly.

3. The Rule of Two -- In Practice

The Rule of Two is your single strongest protection. It is referenced across virtually every ECB safeguarding document, and it is simple: never be alone with a child. Always have another adult present.

The reason is straightforward. If another adult is present, there is always a witness. No allegation can go uncorroborated. No innocent moment can be rewritten. You are protected.

Scenario: The late parent. You are locking up the pavilion after a Saturday match. Everyone has gone except a 15-year-old whose parent is running late. Move to an open, visible area -- the car park, the front of the clubhouse. Call another adult to stay with you if possible. Call the child's parent to confirm they are on their way. Stay visible until they arrive, then tell your Safeguarding Officer what happened.

Scenario: A child wants to talk. A 16-year-old asks if they can have a quiet word. Do not take them somewhere private. Stay in a visible location -- the edge of the pitch, a bench in view of others -- and ask a second adult to stay within sight. If what the child says raises a safeguarding concern, follow the reporting steps on your Quick-Reference card.

The online extension. The Rule of Two applies to digital communication too. The ECB's Social Media Guidance states: "*Remember that the Rule of Two applies to all your interactions with children, whether in person or online.*" No private one-to-one messaging with under-18s. All contact through parents or the club account.

The grey area: when you are also a parent. If your own children are friends with a child in a team you lead, the lines can blur. The ECB specifically addresses this: the situation "*should be discussed with the Club Safeguarding Officer to ensure this does not place you or them in a situation that could be misconstrued*" (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). **Have that conversation as soon as possible.**

Self-reporting. The ECB acknowledges that unplanned situations happen: "*The ECB is aware unplanned events can happen which means that sometimes staff and volunteers are not able to adhere to this guidance*" (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). If you accidentally find yourself alone with

a child, report it to your Safeguarding Officer straight away. This is not an admission of guilt -- it is you taking control of the narrative before anyone else can.

4. Communication and Social Media -- The Digital Boundary

When you take on a leadership role, something specific changes about your online life. The ECB's Social Media Guidance puts it directly: *"If your relationship to those in your team changes (e.g. if you are appointed captain or coach), then your online contact with any children in your team will have to change."*

Why all contact goes through parents. The principle is transparency. When you arrange training or playing details for under-18s via their parent or carer, there is always a record, always a third party who knows what was communicated. This creates an audit trail that protects you.

The 16/17-year-old exception. As children approach adulthood, the ECB recognises they may need information directly. The acceptable approach for 16- and 17-year-olds is to *"contact the parent/carer and to copy in the child with the parent's prior consent"* (Social Media Guidance). The parent remains the primary contact and can monitor all communications.

The noticeboard test. The ECB offers a practical filter for anything you post online: *"If you would not put it on the club notice board, it does not belong on the club's social media platforms."* Simple, memorable, effective.

Scenario: A junior player messages you directly. A 15-year-old sends you a WhatsApp asking what time nets are on Thursday. Do not reply -- however harmless the question. Inform their parent and your Safeguarding Officer. The ECB lists responding to a direct message from a child as a "Do Not" (Social Media Guidance). It is not about the content of the message. It is about maintaining the boundary.

Scenario: Posting match-day photos. You take some great photos of a winning match and want to post them on the club's social media. Remember the **picture/no name rule**: if a child's image is used, do not name them; if a child is named, do not use their image. And ensure written parental consent is in place before posting any photos of under-18s. See your Quick-Reference card, Section E.

5. Physical Contact and On-Pitch Conduct

The guidance around physical contact is not about removing warmth from the game -- it is about drawing clear lines so nobody is left guessing what is appropriate.

Why fist bumps and high fives. The ECB states that staff and volunteers should *"limit celebrations to a fist bump or a high five"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). It is a bright line. Everyone knows where they stand, with no grey area to exploit and no innocent gesture to misinterpret.

Why never adjust grip from behind. The ECB is absolute on this point: *"A member of staff or volunteer should never attempt to adjust the grip of a child from behind in the normal batting stance position"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). The physical position is inappropriate regardless of intent. Find another way to demonstrate -- stand to the side, use your own bat, show a video, or ask the child to mirror your grip.

Equipment adjustment. Helping children learn to manage their own protective equipment is *"an important part of their transition to hardball cricket"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). If external kit

must be adjusted for safety and a parent is not available, do so in public with other adults present. **Never adjust any padding beneath clothing** -- including breast, abdominal, and thigh protection.

Scenario: A child is about to be hit. You can and should intervene physically to prevent immediate injury. The ECB confirms staff and volunteers may *"take appropriate action to prevent a child from hurting themselves or others"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). Check the child is OK, inform their parent, and report the incident to your Safeguarding Officer.

Children with disabilities. Additional touch may be needed and must be *"agreed in advance with the player and their parents/carers and the relevant Safeguarding Officer"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). Do not improvise -- plan ahead.

6. Changing Rooms and Transport

These two areas have the strictest rules because they involve the highest vulnerability.

Why the changing room rule is absolute. The ECB states: *"Adults must not change or shower at the same time as children"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). Walking through changing rooms while children are changing is on the ECB's list of reportable low-level concerns. Change separately, change at different times, or use different facilities. Further guidance can be found here: [Guidance-on-Changing-Rooms-and-Showering-Facilities.pdf](#)

Transporting Children to Cricket Activities: The ECB's position is unambiguous: *"coaches, staff and volunteers should NOT transport children to and from cricket activities"* [Transporting-Children-to-Cricket-Activities.pdf](#) Full responsibility sits with parents and carers. An enclosed car with a child is the scenario most open to misrepresentation. By not transporting children, you eliminate the risk completely.

The parent-volunteer grey area. If you are both a parent and a team leader, and your children are friends with teammates, the ECB recommends a *"common-sense approach"* that should be *"agreed with the Club Safeguarding Officer and reflect best practice and 'The Rule of Two'"* (Transporting Children Guidance). Have this conversation before the season.

Emergency transport. In a genuine emergency -- a child needs hospital without delay -- the child's safety is paramount. The Rule of Two must be followed: have another adult in the vehicle. Call parents immediately and keep them on the line during the journey. They should meet you at the destination. Report the incident to your Safeguarding Officer afterwards.

Late collection. If a parent is late collecting their child after a match, stay in a visible, open area with another adult. Do not take the child inside alone, and do not offer to drive them home. The club should have a late-collection policy -- speak to Jim or Lisa before the season to make sure one is in place. See your Quick-Reference card, Section D.

7. Photography, Filming, and Live Streaming

The rules around photography exist because images of children, combined with identifying information, can be misused.

Why picture/no name. *"If a child is named (or is otherwise identifiable by, for example, a nickname), avoid using their image alongside the name. If an image is used, avoid naming the child"* (Social Media Guidance). This prevents strangers from connecting a child's face to their identity.

The captain's formal role. If your club uses the ECB's Play Cricket Scorer Pro app, a pop-up box asks the scorer to *"confirm that both captains and both umpires are happy for the match to be filmed and shared"* (Live Streaming Guidance). As captain, you need to know whether all players -- including those on the visiting team -- have given consent before confirming. If any player's parents have indicated they do not consent, that player must not be filmed.

48-hour notice. If your club plans to live stream, photograph, or record a match, you must notify the visiting team *"at least 48 hours in advance"* (Live Streaming Guidance). If sufficient notice and permission is not given, the match should not be streamed.

Scenario: An unfamiliar person is photographing. You notice someone you do not recognise taking photographs of children at a match. Ask them politely who they are and whether they have permission. If you are not satisfied, ask them to stop and speak to your Safeguarding Officer. Parents can photograph their own children, but they *"do not have the automatic right to stream or post images of other people's children online"* (Live Streaming Guidance). See your Quick-Reference card, Section E.

8. Dressing Room Culture and Your Influence

Captains, vice-captains, and coaches set the tone of a team. The culture you create -- through what you say, what you laugh at, and what you choose to ignore -- shapes the environment for every player, especially the youngest.

The ECB is direct about this: an effective staff member or volunteer *"does not participate in, encourage, or ignore any team or dressing room behaviour or culture which seeks to frighten, embarrass, or demoralise anyone involved in cricket"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance).

Initiation and hazing. The ECB's Low-Level Concerns Guidance explicitly lists *"captain/coach enforcing a humiliating team bonding/initiation activity"* as a reportable concern. Initiation rituals -- however "harmless" they may seem -- are a form of child-on-child abuse when children are involved. There are no exceptions for tradition.

The "downplaying" problem. When banter, teasing, or hazing is ignored or laughed off by someone in authority, it sends a message: this is normal, this is acceptable. That message makes children less likely to report genuinely harmful behaviour, because they have learned that adults in authority do not take these things seriously. Your reaction to the small things shapes whether children trust the system with the big things.

Role modelling. The ECB states that an effective volunteer *"is an excellent role model. This includes not smoking or drinking alcohol when working with children, and being mindful of their behaviour around the club at all times, including at social events"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). Coaching with alcohol on the breath is on the ECB's list of reportable low-level concerns. If there is a post-match drink in the clubhouse and under-18s are present, be conscious of the example you set.

Inclusive language always. The ECB protects all children *"regardless of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, ability, or disability"* (Safe Hands Policy). You set the standard. Challenge discriminatory language immediately, regardless of who says it. See your Quick-Reference card, Section C.

Inclusion is safeguarding. This is not a separate agenda. The ECB makes the connection explicit: *"appropriate safeguarding is not just about preventing abuse but setting high standards and promoting a positive culture"* (Safe Hands Policy). The culture you create is part of your safeguarding responsibility -- and the culture you tolerate is the one you own.

Your behaviour sets the standard. *"Adults at the club should act as role models for younger members by using inclusive and appropriate language, and demonstrating positive and respectful behaviour, especially if they are in a position of responsibility"* (Creating a Safe, Welcoming and Inclusive Environment Guidance). What you say -- and what you let pass -- defines the environment.

Discrimination is a recognised form of abuse. The ECB defines emotional abuse in cricket to include children who *"are subjected to repeated criticism, sarcasm, name-calling or discrimination"* and recognises *"bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice based and discriminatory bullying)"* as child-on-child abuse (Recognising Signs of Abuse and Neglect). Ignoring racial or homophobic banter between players does not make you neutral -- it makes you complicit.

Scenario: A senior player makes a racially dismissive comment about a 16-year-old. Other players laugh. (*Derived scenario.*) If you say nothing, you have told every junior player in earshot that this is acceptable at your club. Challenge it immediately, speak to the player privately, report it as a low-level concern. The ECB recognises that *"some communities face additional barriers in sharing concerns"* (Safeguarding Strategy 2025-28) -- your response to the small things determines whether anyone trusts the system with the big things.

Cricket's vision. *"We want cricket to be the most inclusive team sport in England and Wales"* (Safeguarding Strategy 2025-28). That starts in your dressing room.

9. Away Fixtures and Trips

The ECB notes that *"in any given season, as many as 50 per cent of matches can be played away from the home club"* (Managing Children Away Guidance). Whenever under-18s are in your team, the away-fixture guidance applies.

Key roles to know about. The ECB recommends appointing a Head Coach (cricket), a Team Manager (pastoral care and logistics), a named safeguarding lead, and a Home Club Contact who stays behind for emergencies. You may not hold any of these roles formally, but you should know who does.

What parents must know. Before any trip, parents should receive written details of the itinerary, accommodation, staff names, emergency contacts, the safeguarding lead, and codes of conduct (Managing Children Away Guidance). If you are leading the team, confirm this has been done.

Accommodation rules. Children must never share rooms with adults. Players of different genders do not share rooms. Staff and volunteers do not enter children's rooms. The ECB is clear: *"Do not enter a child's bedroom or invite them to your bedroom"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance). The only exception is if a child is too ill to leave their room -- in which case, enter with another adult and report immediately to the safeguarding lead.

Confidential conversations. If a player needs to speak to you privately during a trip, bedrooms are never appropriate. The ECB recommends *"a neutral location such as outside, in a meeting room, or in a quiet spot in a communal area such as a hotel reception"* (Managing Children Away Guidance). Always remember the Rule of Two.

Emergency planning. Before you arrive at an away venue, the Team Manager should know the nearest hospital, A&E department, pharmacy, and emergency dentist (Managing Children Away Guidance). It does no harm to ask whether this has been checked.

10. Reporting -- What Actually Happens

The reporting threshold is deliberately low. You do not need proof. You do not need to be certain. The ECB's Low-Level Concerns Guidance describes the threshold as a "*nagging doubt*" -- a sense of unease about something you have seen or heard. And it makes this clear: "*Low-level does not mean that it is insignificant.*" "Low-level" refers to the reporting threshold, not to how seriously it is treated -- "*it means that the behaviour does not meet the harm threshold for a referral to the Cricket Regulator Case Management Team*" (Low-Level Concerns Guidance). Report it and let the system decide.

It is not just about match day. Low-level concerns "*can be about behaviour that's inappropriate at work or outside of work*" (Low-Level Concerns Guidance). What you hear at a social event or see on someone's personal social media counts too. If it triggers your nagging doubt, it is reportable.

What you should recognise as reportable. The ECB provides a list of examples of low-level concerns. These include:

- An adult walking through changing rooms while children are changing
- Being overly friendly (e.g. tagging a player on personal social media, hugging players, inappropriate banter)
- A captain or coach enforcing a humiliating team bonding or initiation activity
- Coaching with alcohol on the breath
- Having favourites or being connected with children on personal social media
- Using inappropriate, sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language
- An unauthorised person hanging around the ground or training session
- A coach offering a child a lift home or waiting alone with a child
- Concerning conduct of a parent or carer toward a child
- Engaging one-to-one with a child in a secluded area (if you see someone else breach the Rule of Two, report it -- your job is to flag it, not investigate)
- Humiliating a child (e.g. publicly criticising a junior player's performance in front of the team)
- Aggressive behaviour or inadvertent aggressiveness in front of children
- Playing an underage player in a match outside permitted age-group regulations

This list is not exhaustive. The ECB says: "*Always remember, if in doubt, report*" (Low-Level Concerns Guidance).

Report even when there is an explanation. "*Even where presented with a plausible explanation (e.g. an accident at home) you should report*" (Recognising Signs of Abuse and Neglect). You are not expected to investigate or judge. You are expected to pass it on.

Recognising emotional abuse in a cricket setting. Some emotional harm looks like competitive coaching. The ECB identifies children who feel "*pressure to perform to unrealistically high expectations*", who are "*made to feel like their value or worth is dependent on their sporting success*", or who are "*forced or pressured to participate when injured*" (Recognising Signs of Abuse

and Neglect). If a child looks distressed and the adults around them are dismissing it as weakness -- that is your nagging doubt.

Why the physical contact rules are so strict. *"There is evidence that individuals have sometimes ignored governing body codes of conduct and used physical contact within coaching or other roles to mask inappropriate touching of children"* (Recognising Signs of Abuse and Neglect). The rules in Section 5 exist because clear boundaries remove the opportunity for abuse to hide behind legitimate contact.

What happens when you report to Jim or Lisa. Your Club Safeguarding Officer assesses the concern. It may be escalated to the County Safeguarding Officer or the ECB Safeguarding Team. (In very serious cases the police may be involved).

If investigated, the person concerned is advised in writing and given the opportunity to provide their account (Safeguarding Regulations, Regulation 5.1). Periodic updates are provided during the process (Regulation 5.6).

Outcomes are proportionate. The range includes: no further action, referral back to the Club or County Safeguarding Officer for local resolution, or referral to the Cricket Safeguarding Panel if there is a risk of harm (Regulation 6.1). The system is designed to be fair: *"The Cricket Regulator will also take reasonable steps to consider the wellbeing of the individual about whom concerns have been raised"* (Regulation 2.11). Many outcomes are educative -- training, mentoring, guidance -- not punitive.

Knowing the system is fair makes people more willing to use it.

The aggregation principle. Multiple low-level concerns can form a pattern that individually would not meet the harm threshold but collectively does. The ECB states: *"multiple low-level concerns can add up to form a pattern that meets the harm threshold"* (Low-Level Concerns Guidance). Your "nagging doubt" might be the piece that connects a bigger picture.

If a child tells you something directly. Listen. Reassure them: "You have done the right thing by telling me." Write down their words -- not your interpretation, their actual words. Do not investigate or ask leading questions. Contact your Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible (ideally within 24 hours). See your Quick-Reference card, Section F.

Adults at risk. You would report a concern about a child without thinking and the same applies here, with one extra step. An "Adult at Risk" is someone who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and cannot protect themselves as a result (Safeguarding Adults Policy). Vulnerability is not static -- *"ability and disability can change over time"* (Safeguarding Adults Policy). A teammate who was fine last season may not be this season.

The extra step is consent. Discuss your concerns with the adult first. But consent is not a veto -- *"there may be circumstances where you need to share information with other agencies without consent to protect an individual"* (Safeguarding Adults Policy). If you believe someone is at genuine risk, report to Jim or Lisa regardless, ideally within 24 hours.

Scenario: A teammate returns from a long absence. They seem withdrawn, anxious, reluctant to change in front of others. You notice unexplained marks. You do not need to diagnose -- report to Jim or Lisa just as you would for a child.

11. Self-Reporting -- Your Safety Net

This is perhaps the most important section to understand, because it is the one that most directly protects you.

The ECB explicitly acknowledges that perfect compliance is not always possible. Unplanned events happen. The guidance is clear about what to do when they do: self-report. The ECB states that self-reporting *"reduces the risk that the behaviour will be misconstrued and may allow early resolution of a practical issue that creates a wider safeguarding concern"* (Staff and Volunteers Guidance).

The Low-Level Concerns Guidance reinforces this, encouraging *"self-reporting that protects an individual from misunderstandings and/or allegations"* -- for example, when someone *"finds themselves in a situation that is unavoidable and unintentional but happened to breach best practice guidance."*

What to self-report:

- You were accidentally alone with a child (a parent was late, another adult left unexpectedly)
- You accidentally hurt or upset a child during a session or match
- A child behaved inappropriately towards you
- A child appeared to misunderstand or misinterpret something you did

12. You Are Not Alone

You are part of a network that extends from your club to the county to the national level.

At Binfield:

- **Jim Browning** (Club Safeguarding Officer) -- 07795 192241
- **Lisa Peneda** (Club Safeguarding Officer) -- 07951 665475

Jim and Lisa are your first point of contact for any concern, question, or situation where you are not sure what to do. There is no such thing as a question that is too small.

At county level: County Safeguarding Officers *"promote safeguarding to clubs, leagues, and other organisations in each county, and provide advice and assistance regarding safeguarding matters"* (Safe Hands Policy). Jim and Lisa will have their contact details.

At national level: The ECB Safeguarding Team provides training, guidance, and direct support. They implement the safeguarding procedure for any matter that meets the threshold for investigation.

Whistleblowing. If you feel your concerns are not being addressed internally, the ECB has *"a Whistleblowing procedure for staff and volunteers to follow"* (Safe Hands Policy).

DBS checks. You may need an Enhanced DBS check. Speak to Jim or Lisa .

ECB Kit Bag. The ECB provides a full set of templates, guidance documents, and resources for clubs at: ecb.co.uk/about/policies/safeguarding/kit-bag-resources

ECB Policies: ecb.co.uk/about/policies/safeguarding/policies-and-procedures | **Kit Bag Resources:** ecb.co.uk/about/policies/safeguarding/kit-bag-resources

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