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## Eligibility Criteria for Middlesex Schools Cricket

1. County Age Group (CAG) Squad Players who play **external fixtures** for their county against other representative sides (Counties, National Teams, Districts, Boroughs) are not invited or enrolled onto our programme as we believe that these players are receiving ample opportunities to progress. Middlesex Schools Cricket would like to focus on the players just below this level and help take their games to the next level and beyond.
2. Players do not play for another organisation that play against Representative sides, this is to widen the pool of players playing at a representative level of cricket. Such organisations include: London Schools Cricket Association, Marylebone Cricket Club (Lords Youth) etc.
3. New trialists should be a minimum of Borough/District level (As a guide), exceptions are made for those who have recently moved into the area or developed recently and shall be nominated by clubs/schools for those opportunities.
4. Players should live in, go to school in, or play for a club within the 6 neighbouring counties to the M25: Berkshire, Surrey, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Kent. They can be nominated by: a club, school, MCC Foundation Hub or private coaches. The nomination will be sent to the administrative team at [admin@middlesexschoolsccricket.co.uk](mailto:admin@middlesexschoolsccricket.co.uk)
5. Players who have represented Middlesex Schools Cricket in the previous season and now represent a county can continue to play for us around their county commitments.
6. Trials take place each year in September/October, if players are nominated later than this we can consider them subject to approval by our management.
7. Returning squad members will not automatically return into the training squad for the next season, the coaches will review their: Playing performances, attitude to learning, general behaviour with teammates, opponents and our officials. They shall be notified about whether they are re-joining the training squads, or they need to trial, or that the programme is not suitable for them at that point in time. They are more than welcome to re-trial the year, they shall be given feedback and if they have worked to significantly improve their game they shall be asked to re-trial.

**Web:** [www.middlesexschoolsccricket.co.uk](http://www.middlesexschoolsccricket.co.uk)

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## About Middlesex Schools Cricket

Middlesex Schools Cricket plays Representative Level Cricket. Our goal is to provide via playing and training, various learning opportunities that can only be found at a Representative level of cricket and provide those opportunities to a majority of Non-County Age Group cricketers.

Middlesex Schools Cricket is an independently run organisation whose goal it is to help develop young athletes as leaders and instil our core values, principles and develop life skills, belief and discipline to help them excel in Cricket and beyond.

We are not a county; we offer playing opportunities against Representative Teams (Boroughs/Districts/Counties and National Teams) with the view to developing players to break into their respective county age group squads and beyond.

Middlesex Schools Cricket is an independent organisation which relies upon a blend of: Schools, Clubs, Parents, Coaches and Children.

We have an Age Group Structure starting from the Under 10s to the Under 18s, each age group has an assigned Age Group Lead Coach, then a parent volunteer Age Group Manager assigned to each fixture.

As the Age Group Manager is a parent of a child in the squad, to avoid bias, they are not included in the Selection of the squads for fixtures, this is conducted by the Age Group Lead Coach and conducted with the other professional coaches. The Age Group Manager will not have an influence in selection or the strategy by which the game is executed including the opportunities given to each child. They are volunteers who are helping the Age Group Lead Coach conduct successful fixtures by communicating with the: Parents, Players, Officials and Age Group Lead Coach.

Each Age Group is assigned upto 3 Age Group Managers so that a child is not selected based on their parents involvement to avoid any perceived bias.

Our Selection policy is based on merit, but we need to consider the standard of our opposition, their requirements from the fixture (Competitive vs Development) and the developmental needs of our own squads and players.

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## Our Selection Policy

1. Children must play and train in their own age groups for the majority of the season. We want to build 'teams' so getting to know their peers is an important part of this process. The only exceptions to this will be players on: County Emerging Players Programmes, County Academies, our own Middlesex Schools Cricket "Emerging Players Programme" (Starting from September 2023), or by consent of our Director of Cricket and Management team.
2. Players will prioritise **our fixtures above Club fixtures**, they should prioritise their County Pathway Fixtures (Even Borough/District Cricket over our County fixtures) as we want them to have the best opportunity to be selected for their local county. If they do not prioritise our fixtures over club fixtures this affects their rights to be selected for our fixtures moving forward.
3. If a player changes their availability after the announcement of their selection, on the first occasion they shall be given less priority for selection over other squad members for the next fixtures. A repeat offence can mean removal from the squad unless there are mitigating circumstances (Our Management team would review this).
4. **Training Squad Selection** – Training is split into two main phases in the Off Season:
  - a. Winter Training Programme 1 – September to December. Players would be trialling and be added to the age group squads, by December players will be informed of whether they will be retained to Winter Training Programme 2.
  - b. Winter Training Programme 2 – January to April. Players in this group will form the squads for the next season.
    - i. There might be trialists at this phase, they are not guaranteed to be selected into the squads and will be assessed over a period of time (Unless it is deemed unsafe for them to continue to do so)
5. **Summer Match Squad Selection** - The Squads are selected by May and squads for each age group will contain ideally between 20-30 players. In exceptional circumstances if the number of participants is high, we might ask some players to attend skill specific programmes to meet their developmental needs, they would still be retained in the squad.
6. The fixtures shall be split into various categories and the Age Group Lead Coach shall be informed of which fixtures fall into which category. They shall then plan out selections based on the fixture and whom is available. We would aim to match the opponent to create a well fought out fixture, with this in mind some players role in the side may change so that the fixture remains competitive but allows for development.
7. Our sides are selected with 12 players in the side, the top 6 batters would focus on batting and the bottom 6 batters would bowl all of the overs in the fixture for the majority of fixtures this rule remains UNLESS it is a competitive fixture i.e. on a Competitive tour, a Major County or National Team.
  - a. On tours the squad size can increase to 14-15 depending on the length of the tour.
8. Players are categorised (Development or Competitive Level Player) and they can move both up and down the categories. We would expect everyone to make their availability known **at least a week** in advance on SPOND. Emails, whatsapps and calls will **not** be accepted as notification of availability. If you have issues accessing spond please contact our Admin staff to have this resolved [admin@middlesexschoolscricket.co.uk](mailto:admin@middlesexschoolscricket.co.uk).

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- a. The Category your child is in can change based on their performances, this is not just numerical, it includes the context of their role within fixtures. The coaches do not need to share with parents or players which category they are currently in.
  - b. The Majority of new players would start in the Development category as we have not seen them play before.
9. We aim to ensure that everyone has played fixtures in the summer, we have to bear in mind how often they have put their availability, if your child is not made available for Development fixtures and you only put them available for Competitive fixtures, then you have not afforded them an opportunity to showcase their skills and earn the right to play in those fixtures. We would urge all parents/guardians to keep their player available for as many fixtures as possible.
10. Selections for Competitive tours is based on performances with Middlesex Schools Cricket (Where we have seen the player perform on the pitch), for new players we always leave spaces in the squads so that they have a fair right to earn the right to be on a competitive county festival for their age group.
11. Priority of games, we would expect players and parents to prioritise our fixtures over club games, the only exception to this is the National cups where we need to be informed about them having those cup games. If we are not informed and they opt for a club game over our fixture they will not be selected for the next fixture that they are available for.
  - a. Players must prioritise their County Pathways: Borough, Regional, District and County fixtures over our fixtures.
  - b. We expect all players on county pathways (Borough/District included) to put **unavailable** on Spond with a note of where they are playing so if they become available and we require a player they can be contacted to be added to the fixture.
  - c. If a parent/guardian changes their availability **after** a squad is announced (Bar injury or exceptional circumstances) due to a clash they will be deprioritised for the next fixture that they are available for.
  - d. If there is a repeat occurrence, can result in removal from the squad.
12. We arrange fixtures against: Boroughs, Districts, County Development Sides, County Sides, National Teams, Schools and Academies. We would place these opponents into different categories:
  - a. National Team – Competitive Fixture (In most cases)
  - b. County Team – Competitive Fixture
  - c. County Development Team – Development Fixture
  - d. Borough/District – Development Fixture
  - e. MCCF Hub – Development Fixture
  - f. School – Development or Competitive
  - g. Private Academy – Development Fixture
  - h. County or National Festival – Competitive – This is the players opportunity to show counties/nations across the country/world what they are capable of as a player and team.
13. Categories of Fixture and Type of player/opportunity for that fixture
  - a. **Competitive Fixture** – Players will be selected who are performing at their age group level consistently with their main skills in their assigned roles. Based on

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performance, some players will be asked to play in competitive fixtures that have not previously and vice versa.

- b. **Development Fixture** – Players who have not played with us previously have the opportunity to play representative cricket, in time they might also be a player that the coaching staff feel need to play competitive fixtures when we feel it is appropriate for them. These fixtures provide opportunities for the player to bat or bowl, the Top 6 will bat and the bottom 6 bowl (Typically). For all-rounders we aim to ensure to see them perform both skills, we can not have players opening the batting and bowling as too many would lose opportunities. Their role is also dependent upon what players are available and the balance of the side that is available.



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## Right of Appeal

We have 2 types of appeals process, an Informal and Formal process.

It is important to note that we select for competitive fixtures based on performance in context of the games that players have participated in, how they trained, how they integrate within the team and more.

1. Informal Complaints Process – This process regards any concerns about Nepotism or any other unfairness which can be raised by Parents, Guardians, Clubs or Schools. The process is as follows:
  - a. This process relates to general feelings of unfairness and process rather than specific examples.
  - b. This process shall be originated by email to the Middlesex Schools Child Welfare and Safeguarding officer. [Alankar.ghag@elitecricketpa.com](mailto:Alankar.ghag@elitecricketpa.com) rather than the Admin email to ensure confidentiality.
  - c. All such complaints shall be treated in confidence and the complainant shall not be identified.
  - d. The Child Welfare Officer shall investigate all such complaints and discuss them with the Age Group Lead Coach of the age group concerned. This shall not be discussed with the Age Group manager.
  - e. Complaints of such a nature shall be acknowledged and addressed as appropriate but a response may or may not be given.
  
2. This may only be instigated by parents or guardians of a specific child that is aggrieved at particular selection decisions.
  - a. Complaints must be addressed in writing to the Middlesex Schools Child Welfare Officer via email [alankar.ghag@elitecricketpa.com](mailto:alankar.ghag@elitecricketpa.com) rather than the Admin email to ensure confidentiality.
  - b. Complaints will be made known to the Age Group Lead Coach and Age Group Managers unless child welfare and safeguarding issues are involved; in which case, complaints might be handled anonymously.
  - c. All cases will be considered individually and complainants should specifically state reasons if they believe a case should be handled anonymously.
  - d. It must be understood anonymous selection complaints are by their nature difficult to properly discuss and resolve.
  - e. An appropriate committee will be constituted and lead by the Child Welfare Officer to look into the complaint.
  - f. The committee shall review the complaint and determine what action is required to be taken as a result of their findings and discussion.
  - g. This shall be communicated to the Parent/Guardian who raised the complaint. The Age Group Lead Coach and Age Group Managers will be contacted about any remedial actions to be taken by them if required.

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## Children of Age Group Managers or Lead Coaches

1. As we have multiple Age Group Managers, players are not simply selected based on their parents role within the team, we feel that this is a fairer system for all.
2. Age Group managers are selected and interviewed by management to ensure that they understand how Middlesex Schools Cricket will run fixtures, tours etc in a way that fits in with our Ethos.
3. Age Group Lead Coaches are qualified coaches and if their child is in their age group their selection and playing opportunities are determined by the other Age Group Leads with the Head coaches input.
4. Selection decisions for regular match play situations and for touring teams involving children of an age group manager or age group coach shall not be subject to the approval of the Selection Committee (Formed with the Age Group Lead Coaches and Head Coach). Parents should feel free to express any discontent through the appeal process noted above.

## Captains and Roles

1. Each Squad shall have upto 4 captains per age group and the role of captain will be rotated at intervals, we believe in creating Leadership groups and based on how players conduct themselves in training and on the pitch we have discussions with them about whether they would wish to Captain then offer support for their development tactically but also their soft skills and how they interact with team mates to help their team mates thrive.
  - a. Captains are encouraged to think for themselves, the coaches will not be changing fields during the game. We would expect no parents to adjust fields or instruct any player on what they feel they should be doing. We want them to become independent thinkers and we shall use drinks breaks and the 12<sup>th</sup> Man to relay on any relevant information after chatting to the 12<sup>th</sup> man about what they have noticed.
2. Each player shall be given an opportunity to showcase one of the main skills in each fixture. For the Majority of fixtures the top 6 batters will ONLY bat, the bottom 6 batters will bowl. Please be aware that sometimes results can be one sided which means the opportunities on that day are more limited than hoped for, weather can be another contributing factor.
  - b. For all rounders we aim to try and see them perform each skill across the season, we ask players and parents to consider that based on the availability this might not always be possible, we might for instance see a very batting heavy team available for a fixture and your child might have to bowl or vice versa. We shall be asking the Age Group Lead Coach to keep track of who has done what and the management shall be checking on the scorecards.
  - c. Some counties will state that their player only gets to bat for them and asks us to play that player in their second skill to aid their development, so we have various considerations to make but shall communicate with parents about this sort of extreme example.

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