

BOYS PATHWAY SELECTION POLICY 2026-2027

1. Introduction

- Warwickshire CCC's (WCCC) pathway spans three distinct phases for boys:

EARLY ENGAGEMENT PHASE (U10 – 12) – academic years 4-7

MATURATION PHASE (U13-U15) – academic years 8-10

CONFIRMATION PHASE (U16-U18) – academic years 11-13

- This policy outlines the procedures, criteria and timeline for player selection within each phase of the pathway. It is important to remember that a player's age does not always reflect the stage that best supports their development. Some players may begin the sport later than others, and for that reason, may be placed in a different phase to peers of the same age. Please be reassured that this is completely normal. Every player develops at their own pace, and progress is not always linear. A player's readiness for training and skills is better understood by considering their individual maturity, stage of skill development, and physical growth, rather than age alone. The player groupings outlined below simply provide a broad framework to guide selection decisions for WCCC:

BOYS
Early Engagement Phase (EEP) U10-U12 County Age Group (CAG) U13-U18 Squads (Winter & Summer) Skill Set Groups for Batting, Seam Bowling, Wicketkeeping & Spin Bowling (from U13-U18 age groups) Emerging Player Programme (EPP) Academy Programme

2. Aim

- The WCCC player pathway aims to produce home-grown, English-qualified talent for the professional squads at Warwickshire and England.
- We aim to serve the wider game at all levels by producing as many high-quality players who play in ECB Premier League competitions and the National Counties Cricket Association (NCCA) as possible.
- We strive to deliver a world class development environment to deliver the most inclusive pathway for future players across the UK.
- To fulfil this ambition, WCCC's goal is to identify, select and develop players of the highest potential to represent the Warwickshire Pathway across all phases.

3. Eligibility

- To be eligible for selection for the **WCCC Early Engagement Programme** or **County Age Group Programme**, a player must:
 - Have been born in, is a permanent resident within, attends a school in (international exchange students are ineligible), or have been a bona-fide playing member of a club in the Warwickshire catchment area for at least the entire preceding season including playing in representative matches for that club.

Any player wishing to join the Early Engagement Programme **must** meet this eligibility criteria otherwise they will not be considered, to ensure alignment with the ECB's objectives of the EEP, one of which is to provide more localised opportunities for players.

For those players wanting to join the County Age Group Programme, the only exceptions to the above are when:

- a player who has not been formally selected by another First Class (FC) or National County (NC) for whom the player is otherwise qualified, OR written consent has been received from the outgoing FC or NC pathway lead,

OR the player was born overseas and is committing to English qualified status via residency, visa application, and / or pursuit of UK passport.

- Not be suspended from participation in cricket or any other sporting activity because of inappropriate or criminal behaviour. Some players could still be eligible under this criterion if they have been through a period of rehabilitation and consistently meet agreed code of conducts expectations.

Age Groups are defined by the player's age at midnight on the 31st August in the year prior to the relevant season. A player may only represent one County in any one Competition in any one season, except for those players that are dual registered with another County – this would directly impact any players dual-registered with Staffordshire.

Individuals, by making themselves available for selection and when selected, will agree to abide by the policies, codes of conduct, rules and regulations of the WCCC, including this policy. Consistent failure to adhere to WCCC policies could lead to deselection and removal from the pathway at any time.

4. Selection Panel & Annual Timelines

BOYS PATHWAY GROUPS		
Programmes	Timeframe for Selections	Example Members of the Selection Panel
Early Engagement U10-U12 Squads	October 2026	Chair: High-Performance Coach (Early Engagement Lead) 1 x Age Group Lead Coach (for each age group) 1 x Age Group Assistant Coach (for each age group) 1 x Age Group Manager (for each age group) 1 x Pathway Lead, Boys
County Age Group U13-U18 Squads	November 2026 – Winter Training Squads. April / May 2027 – Summer Squads (including Development Teams at U13 / U14 / U15).	Chair: Pathway Lead, Boys Academy Lead (U16s – U18s only) 2 x Full-Time High-Performance Coaches Sub-County Programme Lead (U13 / U14 / U15 only) 1 x Age Group Assistant Coach (for each age group) 1 x Age Group Manager (for each age group)
Skill Set Groups	November 2026	Chair: Pathway Lead, Boys Academy Lead 2 x Full-Time High-Performance Coaches WCCC Professional Coaching Staff – 2 nd XI Coach & Pathway Bowling Consultant (where applicable)
EPP & Academy Groups	EPP / Academy Cohorts confirmed by September / October 2026. New players can be added to the EPP / Academy throughout the 2026-2027 cycle.	Chair: Pathway Lead, Boys Academy Lead (U16s – U18s) 2 x Full-Time High-Performance Coaches WCCC Professional Coaching Staff – 2 nd XI Coach & Pathway Bowling Consultant General Manager Team Performance (where applicable) General Manager Player Pathways & Recruitment (where applicable) Head of Performance, Staffordshire (where applicable)

An independent observer from the WCCC EDI Steering Group (either a full-time WCCC Staff member or volunteer from a panel of 4 people) will be invited to each selection discussion to ensure key processes are fair and robust (County Age Group Selections for Winter and Summer only) – WCCC reserve the right to add other personnel to diversify the panel when needed, which may include wider Warwickshire Professional Staff, ECB observers and sport practitioners holding similar positions in another sport/related setting. Personnel added to each selection discussion will be suitably trained in unconscious bias training, fair recruitment and selection training. The principle of 'multiple eyes, multiples times' is seen as crucial to effective selection, and for Academy & EPP selections, it is proposed multiple panel meetings are scheduled ahead of agreement and publication.

As a result, selection panels have been expanded to include relevant pathway coaches / assistant coaches / managers, to create a sub-group of respected individuals who contribute their performance-based views and feedback, prior to the full-time staff making final decisions, which eliminates the influence of any single vote. Including both full-time staff and casual pathway coaches/managers within the selection process increases the diversity of the panel in relation to ethnicity and school background.

5. Selection Meetings

- It will be the responsibility of the Chair of the Selection Panel to ensure that panel members have sufficient information available to them at the meeting to inform their decision-making.
- The programmes will vary in size year on year depending on the quality of the player pool and the best course of development for each child under consideration.
- The Chair of the Selection Panel will have responsibility for ensuring the compilation of information on individual players which is relevant to the selection criteria detailed in Section 6 – this may include but is not limited to: -
 - Performance / Video Footage (collected by WCCC or sent in by the individual)
 - Performance Data from CAG and Club Cricket (e.g., runs scored, wickets taken, etc.)
 - Performance Analysis (e.g., Pace Data, Spin Rates, Pitch Maps, etc.)
 - Internal Scouting Reports and Match Impact Data (game by game)
 - Feedback from CAG Coaches and Management Teams
 - Physical Performance Outputs from the S&C Team (EPP/Academy S&C Coach & Pathway S&C Coach).
 - Current Medical and Injury Status
 - Individual Long Term Development Goals
 - Relevant Contextual Information i.e. years playing the sport, participation in other sports, birth dates by quartile.
- Members of the selection panel will undertake that any personal or sensitive information provided to them on individual players will only be used for the purposes of the selection process, and not for any other purpose; also that this information will be managed in accordance with the terms of the WCCC's Privacy Policy, and the rights of the players which are set out within this policy will be observed.
- The selection panel will always take its decisions and exercise its discretion reasonably, equitably, rationally, without bias and only by reference to relevant factors (whether those factors are explicitly referred to in this policy or otherwise).
- The Pathway Lead, Boys and Full-Time Performance Team Staff (Academy Lead & High-Performance Coaches) will share their feedback on players last to avoid influencing the process.
- Each member of the panel will be **asked to declare any perceived bias or conflict of interest 72 hours prior to selections being discussed and / or published**. Coaches with potential conflicts of interest will act in a non-voting capacity, where they can contribute essential information to selection discussions, but they will not be included in the definitive decision-making process such as casting a vote on final selections.
- Selection will ideally be decided **by consensus** among the voting members of the panel. If consensus cannot be achieved, the Pathway Lead, Boys will decide on the best course of development for the child under consideration.
- A summary of the discussions and decisions made during the meeting will be reviewed by the WCCC Governance & EDI Manager and WCCC People & Culture Manager. They will review the entire selection process and provide feedback to the Chair of the Selection Panel, whilst having due regard to the sensitivity of personal data.

6. Selection Criteria

- The selection panel will discuss players using the principles which are set out within WCCC's Talent Development Framework.
- The main entry point for the boys in the Early Engagement (U10-U12) phase is via an open nomination process via an online form. For those applying in the County Age Group (U13-U18) phase, the initial entry point is via a video application via Ludimos. WCCC have moved towards a self-nomination model to further enhance the inclusivity and diversity of the pathway, and to remove any perceived or actual barriers to entry.
- The following criteria will be used when assessing a player for entry to the pathway via a video application or in-person:

BATTING	SEAM BOWLING	SPIN BOWLING	WICKET-KEEPING
Quality of decision. Quality of balance and shape. Quality of contact.	Repeatable and rhythmical run up. Quality of alignment to the target. Any pace potential indicators at crease or outcome. Obvious intent to bowl quickly or get sideways movement.	Run up intent. Quality of alignment to the target. Effort to spin ball. Does it turn? Potential to deceive in the air.	Quality and consistency of catch - is it easy or an effort? Quality of posture. Head hands feet alignment. Efficiency of feet movement.

- Once involved in the pathway, the selection panel will consider the following core principles to complement selection, in relation to a player's progress and performance:

TEAM FIRST	BE READY	BE SMART	BE POSITIVE
All player actions reflect putting the team in a position to win above all else.	All players prepare to perform consistently in terms of cricket skills, nutrition, strength and conditioning and mental skills.	Does the player assess the match situation, show evidence of adapting, and help the team to make good decisions?	Does the player demonstrate a regular commitment to take the positive option or decision, in the pursuit of winning?

- During the summer season, match impact ratings will be awarded to each player, to offer a 'whole season' profile and aid selection for winter groups.
- Inherent in any selection process is an element of subjectivity, especially within a team sport where an appropriate balance of skills and characteristics within a squad is a key contributor to the achievement of success – cohorts often contain variation on levels of players, meaning direct comparisons are not always possible. Notwithstanding this, the selection panel will ensure that, as far as is reasonable within each context, its decisions are taken based on material and objective facts, and the selection panel will endeavour to act fairly, rationally, and without bias in selection matters.
- Selection for EPP and Academy Groups will be informed and guided by two main criteria:
 - The confirmation phase of the WCCC talent framework, where performance expectations for entry to the professional environment for each skill area are outlined.
 - Succession planning for the WCCC professional men's and women's playing squads.

7. Selection Logistics

- Selection meetings will take place several times throughout the year, as required. The selection panel will meet a minimum of 7 days prior to the convening of any summer playing squad. The selection panel for EPP and Academy groups will meet five times (December, February, April, June & September) throughout the year to review player progress of those within the groups and those on the periphery.

EPP / ACADEMY:

Once selection decisions are made, they will be communicated by the Pathway Lead, Boys for the EPP and Academy Lead for the Academy to:

- Player and family members verbally and in writing; all full-time and relevant part-time / sessional staff, significant others such as private, club or school coaches.
- Such communications will take place within 7-10 days of the selection meeting and will be conducted through appropriate and agreed media.
- Players and other recipients of these communications are prohibited from making any announcement to the public or to the press or via other media regarding the selection until it has been officially announced by WCCC.

EARLY ENGAGEMENT (U10-U12) & CAG (U13-U18) PLAYING SQUADS:

Once selection decisions are made, they will be communicated by the High-Performance Coach (Early Engagement Lead) for the U10-U12 selections and the Pathway Lead, Boys for the U13-U18 selections to:

- Player and family members via letter and / or email correspondence.
- Such communications will be made to offer an absolute minimum of three days' notice before the start of a winter / summer programme.
- Players and other recipients of these communications are prohibited from making any announcement to the public or to the press or via other media regarding the selection until it has been officially announced by WCCC.
- WCCC may decide to select players up or down age groups according to the level of challenge appropriate for their age and stage of development. The player / family will be given verbal confirmation as to why the player has been moved (perhaps temporarily) up or down their usual age group.
- Whereby a player's 'workload' is deemed to be unusually high due to various factors, WCCC are committed to agreeing a draft playing schedule for players for certain periods or all the season. It is anticipated these players will come from predominantly the U14 age groups upwards, and involved in multiple county, club, school and other representative squads. An appropriate member of staff will meet with the player and family and agree a sensible, provisional timetable.

8. Appeals

- Video Applicants - if a player is not successful following a U13-U18 CAG Pathway Video Application, they are entitled to appeal the decision within 7 days. Any notice of appeal must be made in writing to the Pathway Lead, Boys. The appeal will be referred to an independent panel (non-WCCC but will reflect the roles/diversity of the original panel) in order to review the application. If the independent panel deem the candidate suitable of consideration, they will be invited to the in-person observation programme, otherwise the original decision will be upheld.
- EEP & CAG - if a player reasonably considers they should have been selected for an EEP / CAG squad, they are entitled to appeal the decision within 7 days of the squad announcement. Any notice of appeal must be made in writing to the Chair of the Selection Panel (Early Engagement Lead or Pathway Lead, Boys) and will only be admissible if the individual can demonstrate that the published selection policy/process has not been followed in its entirety.
- EPP / Academy - if a player believes they should have been selected for an EPP / Academy Group, they are entitled to feedback from the Chair of the Selection Panel to support the player's development.

9. Withdrawal and Deselection

- If a selected player withdraws from the activity (winter or summer), or is deselected for any reasons, a replacement will be decided either:
 - From among a number of reserves identified by the selection panel during the selection meeting; or
 - By consulting the Sub-County Programme Lead; or
 - By reconvening the selection panel and reiterating the process described above.
- Each selection panel will consider fully the implications of deselecting a player from a squad or programme.

EEP & CAG:

- Prior to any written or verbal announcements, the player and family must be spoken and / or written to, to provide the reasons for deselection (or if they have consistently breached the Player & Parent Agreement signed at the beginning of the programme). Any feedback should consider how a player might be reconsidered for selection.
- Any notice of appeal must be made in writing to the Early Engagement Lead and / or Pathway Lead, Boys within 7 days and will only be admissible if the individual can demonstrate that the published selection policy / process has not been followed in its entirety.

EPP / ACADEMY:

- If a player is not retained on the EPP or Academy Programme (or if they have consistently breached the Player & Parent Agreement signed at the beginning of the programme), they will be offered an exit meeting with their parent/guardian and will also receive a written action plan to aid future development within 7-10 days of the exit meeting.
- Players are entitled to appeal the decision within 7 days of the exit meeting via the Pathway Lead, Boys and / or Academy Lead. Any notice of appeal must be made in writing to the Pathway Lead, Boys and / or Academy Lead and will only be admissible the individual can demonstrate that the published selection policy / process has not been followed in its entirety. For any not players not retained on the EPP / Academy, the Pathway Lead, Boys and the Academy Lead will collate video footage (where applicable) and communicate with other counties to provide a verbal reference to aid the player in sourcing another suitable playing opportunity if desired.

10. Amendments to the Selection Policy

- This selection policy will be reviewed by the Pathway Lead, Boys, WCCC Governance & EDI Manager and WCCC People & Culture Manager on an annual basis (next review September 2027), or as required, and amendments will be approved and adopted as appropriate.