



APPENDIX B - YOUTH PLAYERS

The rules below are based on the BSF Guidelines for Youth players.

Guidance on Under-18s in Adult Softball

Everyone who participates in softball is entitled to do so in a fun, enjoyable and safe environment. These principles apply to all participants, but young people in particular are entitled to a higher duty of care. Welfare policies and procedures are in place to protect young participants and promote good practice (see: <http://www.baseballsoftballuk.com/welfare>).

To encourage the continuing development of best practice, the British Softball Federation has produced the following guidance for slow pitch and fast pitch leagues and clubs when considering whether players under 18 years of age are competent to play in an **adult team**. **The minimum age for an adult league is 14**. The younger players, should be the assessed for competence in every instance.

- Each team shall appoint a Welfare Officer who will ensure that the appropriate welfare procedures and checks are followed. There is a process in place to assess whether the young player is competent to play, coach or umpire at the level at which the team is competing.
- Each Under-18 player shall be assessed for this purpose by the Team Coach. If the team does not have a nominated coach, the Team Captain shall undertake the assessment. Where a coach or umpire is under 18, an authorised club member or BASU member shall make the assessment if the team has no coach or welfare office to assess.
- Four areas shall be considered when deciding if a young player is competent to play in an adult team/game:
 - General Physical Capability
 - Social Development
 - Emotional Development
 - Softball Skills and Ability
- A brief record of the player's name, date of the assessment, competency for all or specified positions and any observations or comments shall be made in the Coach's notebook and "WMSL Youth Player Competence Assessment Form" shall be completed and kept on file with consent forms for U18 players.
- The player's parent or guardian shall complete a Permission to play form in all cases where young players are competing with an adult team. An example form can be found on the BSUK website: <http://www.baseballsoftballuk.com/document/parent-guardian-permission-form>.

A copy of this form must be sent to the WMSL Welfare Officer and shown to the umpire and opposing team captain before the player takes part in any WMSL softball game.

All youth players must have Competency and Permission forms completed and filed prior to League play. NOTE: All records are destroyed by the League Welfare Office after 12 months.



If a parent/guardian is unfamiliar with softball, a club representative shall explain the risks of the sport to them. The completed form shall be retained by the Team Captain or Club Welfare Officer.

- The Team Captain must ensure the young player is included on the team roster and is therefore covered by BSF Civil and Public Liability insurance, and by Personal Accident and Injury Insurance if taken out by the team.
- The Team shall arrange regular training and coaching which the young players should attend, in order to progress their softball development and skills.
- Young players shall wear a helmet when batting and base running in slow pitch as well as in fast pitch softball. Also, in accordance to ISF rules, all under 18s coaching, umpiring or acting a batboys/batgirls, shall wear a helmet while on the field of play.
- Young players shall wear a gum shield and shin pads if playing in either format of the game.
- Young players must wear a catcher's mask if playing that position in slow pitch and fast pitch softball.
- Young players shall wear appropriate footwear.
- The Team Coach or Captain shall review a young player's competence to continue playing should game conditions change – for example, due to adverse weather, a change in the level of play or the conduct or aggressiveness of the opposing team.
- If an Umpire is unsure about the competence of a young player, he or she shall make his concerns known to the Team Captain. The young player's welfare takes priority over all else, caution should be taken when there is any doubt.
- If a team requires assistance in assessing players under 18, they should first seek advice from the league. Should further support be required, please contact the BSUK Welfare Officer.
- If a Youth player is present at any event then photography is not allowed unless:
 - The player has completed a "Photography and Recorded Images Permission Form"
 - The photographer has completed a "Photography Event Registration Form"

Both of these forms are available from the BSUK website.

If you require clarification of any of these points or have questions related to Youth players, then please contact the WMSL Welfare Officer.

Failure to adhere to the rules above will result in the player being declared "ineligible"