



Financial Assistance Policy for County Age Group and Early Engagement Programmes

1. Purpose

Herefordshire Cricket recognises that participation in county age group cricket involves financial commitments which can create barriers for some families. This policy outlines how we can offer financial assistance to ensure cricket remains accessible, while also ensuring we cover essential programme costs.

2. Principles

- **Accessibility:** No child should be prevented from representing Herefordshire due to genuine financial difficulty.
- **Fairness:** Assistance is based on clear criteria, assessed discreetly and consistently.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Families contribute what they reasonably can; support is designed to ease pressure, not remove all costs entirely.
- **Transparency:** Criteria and processes are clear and communicated in advance.
- **Confidentiality:** All applications will be handled in the strictest confidence by a small, designated panel.

3. Scope of Support

Support may include:

- **Reduced Programme Fees:** Discounted contribution, with flexible instalment payment plans.
- **Kit & Equipment Support:** Help with essential playing kit, protective equipment, or clothing.
- **Flexible payment options**

Travel support cannot be offered by HCL

4. Eligibility Criteria

Families may apply for financial assistance if they meet one or more of the following:

- Receipt of means-tested state benefits (e.g. Universal Credit, Income Support, Free School Meals entitlement).
- Annual household income below £30,000 (before tax).
- Exceptional circumstances (e.g. sudden redundancy, medical hardship, single-parent household with multiple dependents).

5. Evidence Required

Applicants will be asked to discreetly provide one of the following forms of evidence:

- Recent documentation confirming eligibility for free school meals, Universal Credit, or other relevant benefits.
- Recent P60, payslips, or self-assessment summary demonstrating income threshold.
- A supporting statement outlining exceptional circumstances, together, where possible by an external reference (e.g. school, community leader).

6. Levels of Support

Support is considered on a case-by-case basis. As a guide:

- **Tier 1:** Up to 75% reduction in programme fees, plus access to kit support, travel support, plus option for instalment payments
- **Tier 2:** 25- 50% reduction in programme fees, plus access to kit support, plus option for instalment payments.
- **Tier 3:** Flexible payment plan only.

The exact level of support will be determined by the Financial Assistance Panel.

7. Application Process

- Families submit a short, confidential Financial Assistance Application Form to kirstysockett@herefordshirecricketltd.co.uk
- Applications are reviewed by the Herefordshire Cricket Financial Assistance Panel (e.g. County Pathway Lead, Treasurer, Welfare Officer).
- Families are notified discreetly and support arrangements agreed before programme fees are due.

8. Confidentiality

All information provided will be kept confidential and stored securely in line with GDPR requirements. Only panel members involved in the assessment will have access.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains fair, transparent, and financially viable.