

## **BIKEABILITY LEVEL 1 CYCLE TRAINING COURSE**



This course standardly consists of 2 sessions of two hours.

Children will need their cycle and cycle helmet for each day.

Parents or Guardians can help their child progress through the course by giving support **beforehand**.

### **They can:**

- Advise the instructor if their child has special needs or there is anything they need to be aware of.
- Check with their child that the cycle is roadworthy
- Provide suitable clothes for their children to wear when riding as they will still go out if the weather is wet or cold. Gloves are ideal for keeping hands warm.
- It is advised that children look at the **Tale of the Road** website (<http://talesoftheroad.direct.gov.uk/>) as this will help with their understanding of the Highway Code. A digital copy can be downloaded in the section titled '**grown ups**'.

Please note that the skills course is designed to **improve** cycle control, not teach children to ride.

Please be aware that only children who reach the required standard by the end of the course will receive a certificate of competence.

Further details on Bikeability levels, please visit: <http://bikeability.org.uk/>

### **INFORMATION ON CHECKING CYCLES**

Parents should check their child's cycle before the start of the course. **If, in the opinion of the instructor, the cycle is not in a road worthy condition, trainees will not be allowed on the course.** Faults are often easily put right but occasionally a new part is required. We should therefore like to draw your attention to the following:

#### **CYCLE HELMETS**

**Cycle helmets can protect the head in a fall or collision. We strongly recommend that your child wears one. All of our instructors do.** A cycle helmet should conform to **BS EN 1078:2012+A1:2012, EN1078** or equivalent.

#### **MECHANICAL CONDITION**

A mechanically sound cycle is a safe cycle. Make sure that all parts are in good repair and no parts are too loose.

#### **FITTING**

Check that the cycle fits the child, i.e. that the balls of both feet are on the ground whilst sitting on the saddle with legs straight. If feet are flat, raise the saddle. See also that the handlebars are at a comfortable height. Adjust both these at intervals as the child grows.

#### **SADDLE**

The saddle should be at a comfortable height for the rider (see above) and the safety mark on the stem should not be visible. Check the saddle nuts are fully tightened.

#### **HANDLEBARS**

In most cases, the handlebars should be roughly the same height as the saddle and they should not move independently of the front forks. The safety mark on the stem should not be visible.

#### **WHEELS**

Spin the wheels gently one at a time. They should spin freely without rubbing against the forks or brakes, and they should not wobble from side to side. Always check that the wheel nuts or quick release levers are fully tightened before you ride your bike. Ensure that no spokes are missing.

## **FRAME/FORKS**

Cracks and fractures in the frame can be very dangerous. If you find cracks you **must not ride the bicycle**. Also make sure there is no serious rusting on the frame.

## **TYRES**

As on cars, worn tyres can kill. Tyres must have a reasonable amount of tread and there should be no bald patches. The side walls should have no splits or bulges. Tyres must be inflated to the correct pressure (shown on side wall). Check them before you ride by pinching the sides of the tyre together. If they squash easily the tyre should be pumped up.

## **BRAKES**

**To be road legal a bicycle must have two working brakes.** Brake blocks and cables should be in good condition and brake levers adjusted so that they can be operated with the minimum amount of pull. If the levers touch the handlebar in the 'on' position the cables are too slack. When sitting on the saddle the rider must be able to operate the brake levers without taking the hands off the handlebars. Levers should be so placed that the child's fingers curve easily around them whilst the palm of the hand is on the grips.

Brakes should be checked every time you ride. Stand by the bicycle, **apply the brakes and try to push the bicycle backwards and forwards. If the bicycle moves forwards then the front brake is not working properly, backwards the rear brake is not working.** Look at the brake blocks they should grip the side of the wheel exactly (not the tyres) when the brake levers are applied. If the brake blocks are worn down they should be replaced. Check that the cables are not frayed.

## **CHAIN**

Oil the chain about once a month.

A loose chain may come off, get caught in the wheels and throw the rider off the bike. On BMX or single gear bikes check it by placing a pencil under the bottom part of the chain and lifting it. If the chain lifts more than 2cm it is too loose. Note that this test does not work for derailleur gears i.e. the most common gear system.

## **GEARS (if applicable)**

Gears cogs easily get clogged up with dirt so keep them clean. Check the cables for fraying. Ensure that using the gear shift actually changes the gear and enables the rider to access all the gears.

## **PEDALS**

The pedals should spin freely be undamaged. They should be fitted with amber pedal reflectors.

## **REFLECTORS**

Bicycles **must** have a **red rear reflector**. Ensure this is positioned correctly and not hidden by mudguards, carriers or clothing. They should also have a white front reflector, amber reflectors on the pedals and white or amber reflectors on the spokes. Keep the reflectors clean – they do not work when dirty, and make sure they don't work loose.

## **LIGHTS (if fitted)**

When ridden at night, a bicycle **must** have a red rear light and a white front light that shine brightly. Check them before going out; if the light is dim, change the batteries.

## **BELL (if fitted)**

We suggest that a bell or alternative warning device is fitted. The correct position is on the handlebar within easy reach of the grips.

## **CYCLE or HELMET MOUNTED CAMERAS**

We do not permit the use of cameras or recording equipment by trainees of any age during a training course unless stated and agreed prior to training taking place.

## **BEING SEEN**

Many accidents involving cyclists occur because a driver fails to notice the rider. Cycles must always have at least a red rear reflector and if your child intends to ride in the dark or in poor weather conditions, then they must also have lights. The use of high visibility fluorescent and reflective garments is strongly recommended. During the on road course pupils will be provided with a fluorescent safety tabard.



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