

**Road Safety and Active Travel
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Dear Parents

Bikeability and Learning to Cycle

All schools in Portsmouth are eligible for free in-school Bikeability training (cycle proficiency) for Years 5 or 6 in Primary and Years 7 to 9 in Secondary. In order for your child to take part in these sessions they need to be able to cycle at a basic level. It's never too soon to start teaching your child this valuable life-skill.

I just thought I'd share a few resources and tips to help any parents/carers who are finding it tricky teaching a child to cycle:

- There are some really great videos on YouTube demonstrating teaching cycling. You may want to view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6SNCvIN4EI>
- Patience and perseverance! It sounds obvious, but if you go into the process knowing that you are teaching them a skill for life, and that you only have to go through this process once, it may help you to keep going if you find your tolerance running out!
- Use a balance bike. If your child has access to a balance bike (a bike with no pedals) this is a great way for them to learn how to balance and often eases the transition to a pedal cycle.
- Find a safe place to practice such as a park or off road paved area. Being near to roads will be dangerous and intimidating, and having to stop for pedestrians all the time will hamper the process.
- Make sure your child has the correct safety equipment; a cycle helmet and high vis are a must.
- Check the bike is the right size and road worthy before starting.

Buying and Repairing a Bike

Are you thinking of buying your child a Bike for Christmas? Low cost bikes for adults and children can be purchased from the Community Cycle Hub, Unit 1 Ark Royal House, Winston Churchill Avenue, Portsmouth, PO1 2GF. They have a wide range of refurbished bikes for

children and adults starting at £20. They also offer servicing and repairs. Visit <http://www.bicyclerecycling.co.uk/contact.html> for details and directions.

Quieter Routes

Portsmouth City Council have recently created a network of Quieter Routes to guide cyclists to different parts of the city using quieter roads and cycle paths which are more suited to less confident cyclists. Coloured stickers on lampposts mark out the routes and give instructions such as when you need to dismount, use a crossing and which direction to travel.

There are five routes between the north and south of the city and five routes between east and west, some of which connect so you can plan a journey to key destinations including the seafront, The Hard and Fratton Park. The quieter routes map is available to download and print from <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/travel/cycling-around-portsmouth>

Cycle Events

Finally, please visit the Pedal Portsmouth Facebook page to find out all about fun cycle events that happen locally. We run the hugely successful Glow Ride annually and you will be the first to find out about Pedal Portsmouth. Full details of these events can be found on <https://www.facebook.com/pedalportsmouth/>

You may also want to like The Learning Place Facebook page or email thelearningplace@portsmouthcc.gov.uk. They are looking to launch Family Cycle Training soon.

Yours sincerely

Road Safety and Active Travel Team
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