

Safe cycle routes

When encouraging children to cycle, you can help them to choose the safest routes to follow. This is especially important if they are cycling to school. They will use this route nearly every day, so plan one that is as safe as possible. Many schools have developed safe routes to school, often off road and linked to local cycle networks or the National Cycle Network promoted by Sustrans. They might not always be the shortest or quickest route, but safety needs to come first.

The Department for Transport advises that children should not be encouraged to cycle on the road until they have received cycle training, ideally training that conforms to the national standard.

Why not do this together? Children can help to research and plan their route, and you can keep a map on your fridge or pin-board.

Look for:

- **Cycle lanes** - where available, these are often the safest option as they provide an exclusive section of the road for cyclists. Ask your local council for details of local cycle networks, or explore the online mapping at www.sustrans.org.uk
- **Bus lanes** - most bus lanes can be used by cyclists, although only at certain times. Check out those near you to see what local rules apply.
- **Local roads** - remind your child to stay alert for parked cars, people opening car doors or stepping out into the road.
- **Quiet roads** - these will often be part of local cycle networks. They are less direct but avoid heavily trafficked roads. Remind your child to stay alert for parked cars, people opening car doors or stepping out into the road.
- **Cycle tracks and bridleways** - these are available to cyclists, but remember on bridleways cyclists must give way to other users.

Avoid:

- **Main roads** - these will carry the most traffic and present the highest risk to your child.
- **Grassy areas** - these might look like a good shortcut, but may have hidden bumps or potholes, be slippery when wet, or be off-limits to bikes.

Cycle safely

www.3mroadwise.ie helps teach children the rules of the road and to recognise road signs. If possible, book them on to a Bikeability or new national standard cycle training course for practical experience of planning and safe cycling. For details contact your local Road Safety Officer.

Make sure that children always wear a fitted helmet and high visibility clothing, and that their bikes have reflective stickers and the appropriate working lights.

Don't let them use a personal stereo, MP3 player or phone when cycling.

Bright Thinking for Cyclists

3M Roadwise
Bright thinking on our roads

Safe cycle routes

Support your child's cycling and visit:

www.3Mroadwise.ie for more tips on safe riding

www.3Mbeseen.co.uk for information on 3M reflective products

www.bikeforall.net

www.discoverireland.ie