Cycle Track and Skills Loop Policy

Statement of intent:

At Burley Oaks Primary School, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Burley Oaks Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

The main priority is to prevent an emergency from occurring in the setting; however, this is sometimes, unfortunately, out of the hands of the school. In an emergency, staff members at Burley Oaks Primary School will endeavour to take all reasonable actions in order to ensure the safety of pupils.

The procedures outlined in this policy aim to minimise disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of all pupils, staff members and visitors.

To be read along side:

- **Active Travel to School Policy**

This policy was reviewed in December 2025 and will be reviewed again in December 2028.

Chair of Governors **Date 8 December 2025**

Headteacher **Date 8 December 2025**

Burley Oaks Primary School

Skills Loop and Cycle Track Policy

Background

Burley Oaks has worked closely with the cycling charity Sustrans to increase pupil activity levels, support sustainable travel to school and to develop a vibrant cycling curriculum to support lifelong skills and enjoyment. When Burley in Wharfedale was included in The Tour de France route in June 2013, great enthusiasm for cycling was created within the community and school. In September 2013 the Burley Oaks Parent Teacher Association (PTA) agreed to work towards raising funds to support the construction of a cycling track on Burley Oaks school grounds. The aim was to enhance the school's facilities and support our continued commitment towards developing cycling skills and provision. This involved a dedicated team of people investigating construction companies, seeking out the opinions of local residents and raising the vast funds required. The track was completed in June 2017, with the official opening held in September 2017, by Olympian Jess Learmonth. Funding was also generously provided by Burley Community Trust.

Purpose of this policy

- To ensure the cycle track is used effectively to enhance cycling provision in our school
- To ensure all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities when using the track
- To outline health and safety requirements to ensure the safe use of the track
- Provide clear procedures to manage potential risks to participants when using the track

What is it?

Two-way Trail

The access to the skills loop and mountain bike trail is from a two-way trail that leads from the playground/multi use games area to the outdoor classroom. It has long sightlines to avoid conflict between different user groups.

The Mountain Bike trail

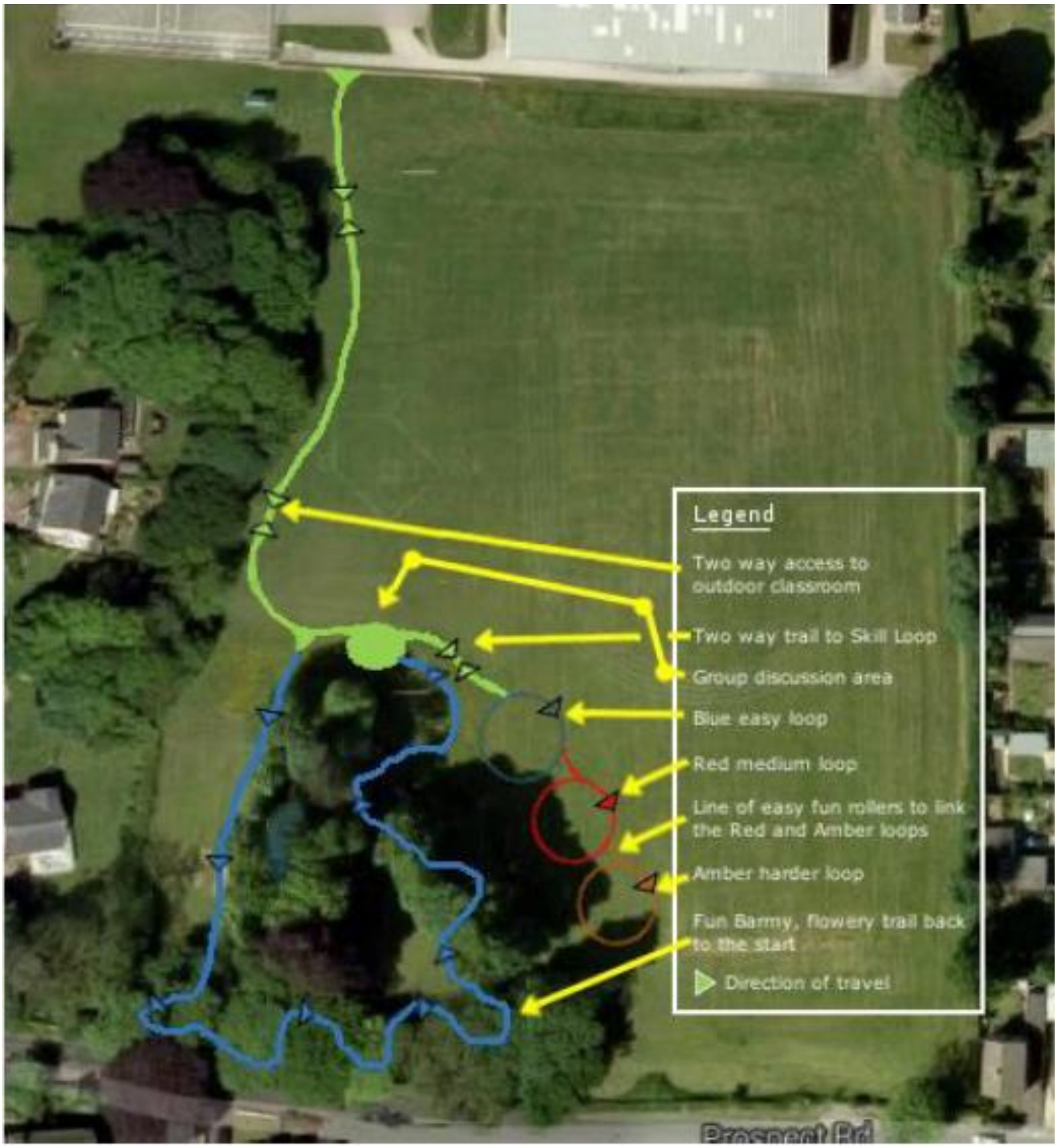
The Mountain Bike trail is a fun trail with simple 'blue grade' features which young riders can ride with confidence. It has been designed to be ridden along with the skills loop if desired. The features on both the skills loop and the mountain bike trail would include, berms, rollers, rock step ups and downs, rock gardens and could also incorporate 'off-chamber riding' and short sections of board walk. All the features are designed and built within their chosen grade. Appendix 1 shows examples of the different levels of challenge within the features of the loops.

The Skills Loop

Three skills loops provide progressively more difficult levels of challenge. The easiest loop is at the start of the skills section, the following loop is more challenging and the third loop is of a 'red grade' standard. Inexperienced riders can gain confidence using the easy loop before attempting the more challenging versions which include bridges, jumps and wobble boards. The skills loops can be ridden individually or as one continuous long loop for the more experienced riders as they are designed to flow together as one. The skills loops have been designed to ease the supervision of users.

The combination of the skills loops and mountain bike trail provides both the educational, skills based challenges with a fun trail. It provides a strong link between education, exercise and fun, and this will become a focus for providing training and mentoring for young people within our cycling curriculum.

The image below shows the position of the site.



Aims

- improve children's fitness levels by supplementing our existing school PE provision
- build children's core strength, stamina, balance, flexibility, coordination and muscle strength
- boost positive mental attitudes
- expose children to another sport for enjoyment and fun
- embed a positive cycling culture
- encourage alternative means of travel to school

Strategy Vision:
To embed cycling as a progressive skill across the school, ensuring safe, inclusive, and sustainable use of the cycle track while supporting PE curriculum objectives and active travel.

Current Provision and Structure

- **Year 1:** Access for advanced riders during enrichment or targeted sessions.
- **Year 2:** Structured use as part of PE curriculum (skills development).
- **Years 3 & 4:** Clubs and opportunities to extend skills and enjoyment.
- **Years 5 & 6:** Bikeability training integrated into curriculum.
- **Year 6:** Lunchtime access with parental consent for independent riding.

Strategic Goals

1. **Progressive Access Model**
    - Maintain current staged approach but formalise progression:
        - Y1: Optional enrichment for confident riders.
        - Y2: Core PE integration.
        - Y3–4: Clubs for skill extension and confidence building.
        - Y5–6: Bikeability and advanced track use.
2. **Curriculum Integration**
    - Embed cycling into PE schemes of work for Y2 and link to outdoor adventurous activities for Y5–6.
    - Align with Bikeability Levels 1 & 2 and DfE PE objectives.
3. **Staff Development**
    - Specialist coaches to lead clubs and advanced sessions/coaching staff to supervise and guide
4. **Inclusivity**
    - Provide differentiated challenges for SEND pupils.
    - Ensure equal access for all genders and abilities.
5. **Safety and Supervision**
    - Our school follows the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) guidance on "Ratios and Effective Supervision," which does not prescribe fixed numerical ratios for visits or activities, including cycling. Instead, we determine supervision levels through a *suitable and sufficient risk assessment* that considers the nature of the activity, the environment, pupil age, competence and needs, and the experience and availability of staff. Ratios for cycling will therefore vary according to these factors, but will always be set at a level that ensures effective supervision and safe management of the group. There will always be a minimum of 2 adults out with a group (with the exception of the Y6 lunchtime access group who have parental consent to access independently), and any more will be allocated due to age, ability, behavioural or medical needs of the group.
    - Risk assessment completed prioir to any programme of sessions eg. ½ term of PE lessons, club, lunchtime activity. This is for a programme os sessions, not every session.
    - Dynamic risk assessments before each session to take account of changing circumstances including the weather
    - Clear emergency procedures and parental consent for independent use.
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
    - Track participation by year group each term.
    - Review skill progression and engagement annually.
    - Audit equipment and track condition each term.

7. **Community Engagement**
    - Promote cycling culture through family events and newsletters.
    - Encourage active travel to school where safe and practical.

Expectations, Roles and Responsibilities
To make cycling and scooting a positive and enjoyable experience for everybody concerned, we expect our **pupils** to:

- ride sensibly and safely at all times
- carefully follow instructions from staff
- consider the safety of others when cycling
- wear a cycle helmet and correct clothing
- ask for help where needed

For the wellbeing of our pupils, we expect **parents and carers** to:

- encourage their child to take up opportunities to develop their competence and confidence in cycling
- ensure that bicycles are roadworthy and regularly maintained
- provide their child with equipment such as a cycle helmet and lock
- read and understand the Active Travel to School policy alongside this one
- understand cycles entering the school premises must be left in an approved area and locked to a fixed stand.
- be aware that the school cannot be not liable for theft or damage

and **staff** in school to:

- ensure that the track is well maintained
- ensure that there are no obstructions prior to use
- ensure that helmets are worn at all times and that children's bikes and clothing are assessed to be safe and fit for purpose
- ensure staffing ratios and support is appropriate to the children using the track
- teach children the necessary skills to use the track safely

Where possible, children will be encouraged to bring their own, familiar cycling equipment from home. A selection of additional bikes (of varying sizes) and helmets have been purchased for use across school so that every child can be included.

When children start school in reception, parents sign consent for them to use our bike track. This is then kept on file for future reference. Separate information for specific training periods will be communicated to parents via our usual means (parentmail) but no further consent will be sought. Please see *Appendix 2* for an example letter to parents containing the parental consent/agreement form.

Health and Safety Considerations
Safe use of equipment
The safety and wellbeing of our children remains our key priority.

- We ask parents to ensure that the equipment brought into school is fit for purpose, road worthy and maintained to a good standard.
- Parents are also advised to read the Active Travel to School policy which provides clear guidance around children getting to school safely.
- Staff will check the maintenance of children's bikes prior to any cycling activity commencing, using the guidance in Appendix 3. If it is decided the equipment has not been maintained to a good enough standard, it will not be used and alternative school equipment will be sought.
- School equipment will be safely maintained to a good standard.

- All participants (staff and children) will wear a helmet. Staff will check that helmets are fitted correctly using the guidance in *Appendix 3*. Children will wear appropriate clothing and footwear with any material that could be caught in the chain, tucked into clothing. Shoelaces must be tied.
- Children will be taught how to keep themselves safe on the bike and on the track. Specifically, they will be shown how to complete the M check and helmet check as part of their understanding. The ultimate responsibility for checking the maintenance of equipment and safe fitting of helmets remains the responsibility of staff supervising the activity.
- The cycle track site will be checked before use for any potential risks.
- The school cannot be liable for use of the track out of school hours and users do so at their own risk.

Supervision Ratios

- Appropriate staff ratios will be maintained in order to monitor, supervise and teach the safe and effective use of the track. There will be at least 2 staff members who will position themselves around the edge of the track in separate places.
- The maximum number of children allowed to use the track at any one time is 16.
- Children will take it in turns to use the facility.
- Staff will monitor the track and provide guidance to children.
- Other children not participating may be observing the track from a safe distance or taking part in other physical activity adjacent to the track. They must also be supervised by an additional adult.
- Users must follow the direction of travel to minimise any risk of injury. Staff may decide to close part of the track to focus on specific skills. Staff may restrict children from using the more advanced skills loops depending on pupil competencies.

Risk Assessment

The significant hazards, who they might harm and how, and what we need to do to manage them are contained in the general cycling risk assessment plan see Appendix 4.
The risk assessment is based on the following considerations:

- What are the potential hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?

Every time staff lead a cycling activity, they will review the existing hazards and controls and add any specific arrangements to manage the hazard. All adults supporting the cycling activity must be briefed on their responsibilities. This must include all adults having read a copy of the Cycling Risk Assessment.

Staff Training

Staff have received general bike safety training. This included how to check bike maintenance and fit helmets safely. Staff will work alongside cycle coaches to develop their confidence in using the track with children.

Inclusion and Differentiation

In order to provide all pupils access to the cycle track

- we will set suitable learning activities and challenges
- respond to pupils' diverse needs
- endeavour to overcome potential barriers to cycling

Our curriculum is inclusive and promotes a growth mind set in all our children linking back to our school moto – Belong, Believe, Achieve. Extra support and interventions are provided for children as necessary and in line with our SEND policy.

Policy Review

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Active travel to school policy. It will be reviewed every 3 years and adjustments will be made according to the requirements of the school and track users.

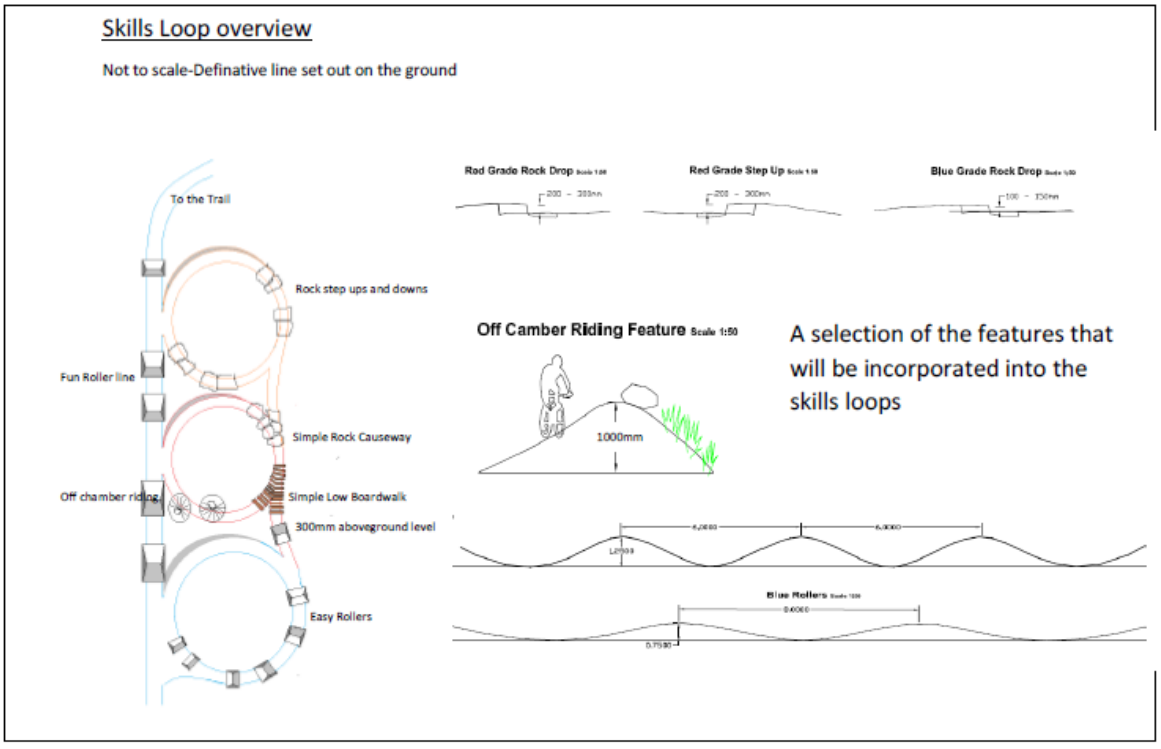
Appendix 1
Example of features on the skills loop

Blue Grade Berm

Blue Grade Step Down Feature

Blue Grade Rollers

Red Grade Rock Garden Feature



Appendix 2

Sample letters prior to taking part in cycling activities.

5th September 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are delighted that Year 2 have been given the opportunity to go out on the school cycle track every Wednesday afternoon. The cycling workshops will give children the opportunity to develop their confidence on our cycling track and improve their skills. Each class will work with the cycle coach every fortnight for the full school year. On the week that they do not have cycling, they will have their normal PE lesson.

Here are the autumn term cycle dates for each class.

2E	2F
10/09/2025	17/09/2025
24/09/2025	1/10/2025
8/10/2025	15/10/2025
22/10/2025	5/11/2025
12/11/2025	19/11/2025
26/11/2025	3/12/2025
10/12/2025	17/12/2025

We would ask parents to ensure equipment coming into school is fit for purpose, road worthy and is always maintained to a good standard. Please can I draw your attention to our Active Travel to School policy on our website, which provides clear guidance around getting to school safely. Please store bikes securely in the bike storage facility outside our main school entrance.

School staff have undertaken cycling training, which includes how to fit helmets and complete essential bike maintenance checks. These will be carried out before any cycling activity takes place in school. The safety and wellbeing of our children remain our key priority. If staff feel equipment is not suitable, or children are unable to bring their own equipment to school, they will be able to access school equipment instead. A range of extra bikes and helmets have been purchased for use across school.

Once the cooler weather arrives, please send your child with a fleece, extra layers, waterproof trousers and gloves in addition to their usual PE kit. On wet days, please send a change of clothes including socks and shoes.

We very much look forward to seeing the children enjoying the track!

Yours sincerely

Mrs Ruth Hill
Key Stage One Phase Leader

Friday 18th October

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to inform you of an exciting new opportunity we are pleased to be offering to our Year 6 pupils.

As you are aware, our Year 6 cohort is a very responsible and trusted group of young people and they have demonstrated this brilliantly over the first half term of their final year at BOPS. It is with this in mind that we would like to introduce access to the bike track for them at lunchtimes.

This opportunity will allow children with cycling confidence to enjoy more of our school grounds during lunchtimes. We are confident that our Year 6 pupils have the maturity and discipline to use the track responsibly and in accordance with a clear set of boundaries and rules that will be laid out and presented to them.

We request that you provide your consent for your child to take part, if they would like to, in the full knowledge that your child is sufficiently competent and able to follow the health and safety rules. Should we have any concerns about individuals or groups of children on the track we will rethink this level of independence.

Pupils will have the option to bring their own bikes or borrow one of the school's. We believe this initiative will be a hugely positive experience for our Year 6 children, and we look forward to seeing them thrive in this environment whilst developing their independence, respect and care for one another.

Once we have an indication of which children would like to take up this opportunity, we will confirm which day your child will have use of the track.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Greenwood
Acting Head/Deputy Head

Year 6 Lunchtime Cycling

Name of Child:_____ Class:_____

I confirm that my child would like the opportunity to use the school cycle track at lunchtimes and that any bike or helmet brought into school to be used will be in a fully safe, well maintained condition.

Name of Parent: _____ Date:_____

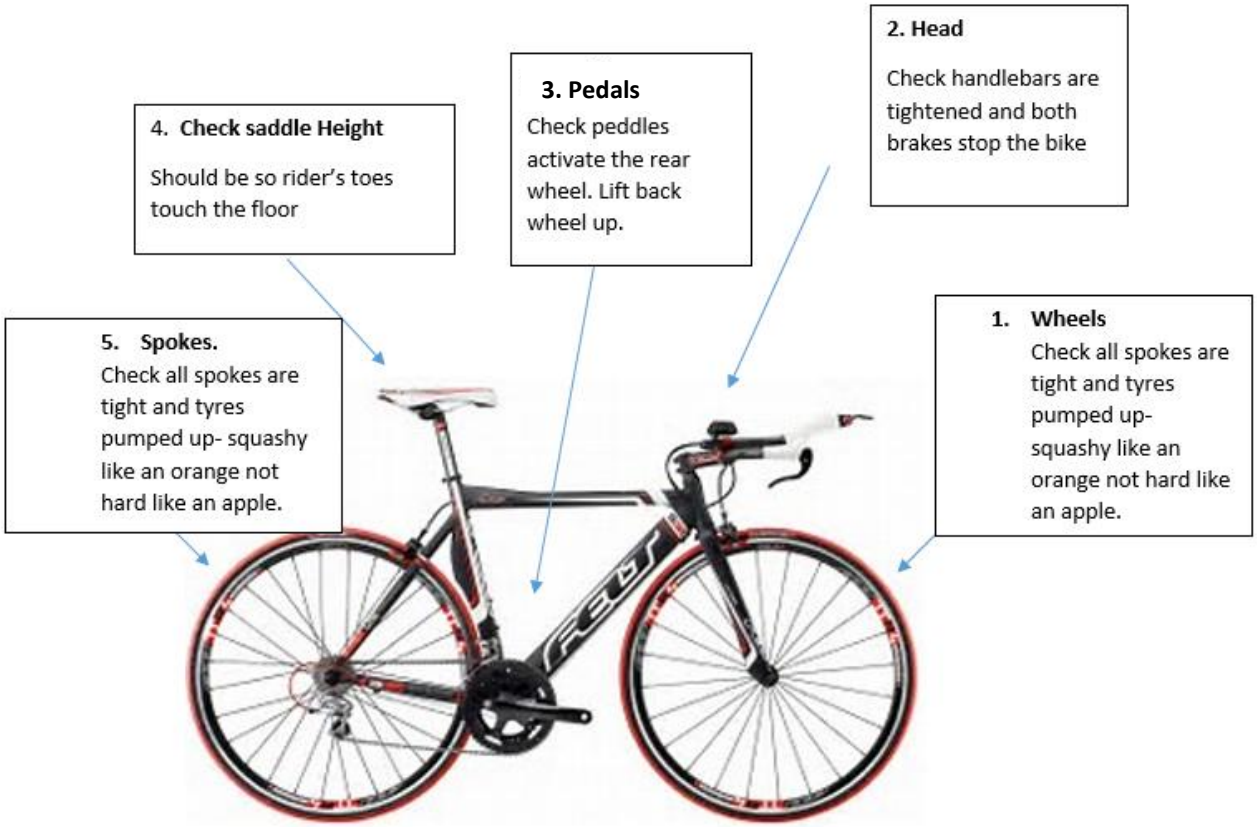
Signature:_____

Appendix 3

Essential Safety checks to be carried out prior to activity taking place.

Bikes

Staff check all bikes using the 'M' method before each use. This includes children's equipment from home.



Any bike not up to this standard should not be used

Helmet safety

All bike helmets need to be checked prior to starting an activity.

- The straps should fit around the ears
- There is a wheel adjuster at the back of the helmet to tighten the helmet
- A gap of two fingers (adult) between the eye brows and the front of the helmet
- The chin strap should be loose enough to fit two fingers in
- The shake test (head shake from side to side) the helmet should remain in place on the head.

Appendix 4
Cycling Risk Assessment - entered on Evolve

Date(s) and times:

Class / Group:
Purpose of Cycling: For example, to increase physical activity and promote use of the track.

Organisation of children/groupings:

Activity Leader:
Other Staff:

Any Medical/special requirements:

Emergency Arrangements:
Leader carries a mobile phone
First Aid kit carried.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom and when?
Bike selection	Staff, participants, onlookers **At risk of:** Puncture wounds, cuts and bruises, slips and falls, sprains and fractures, damage to bikes	☐ Ensure that bikes are suitable for the activity by completing an M-check. M checks to be completed by school staff and sports coaches. ☐ Exclude any unsuitable bikes from being used in the activity ☐ Ensure pump and tools are available to fix simple problems with the bikes ☐ If necessary, adjust the saddle to ensure that the participant is comfortable on the bike. ☐ Check first aid arrangements are in place (if officer and first aid kit not sufficient)	Students will be bringing their own bikes, a letter home to parents has indicated that the bikes must be in good working order for them to participate. School bikes will have regular maintenance checks and will be serviced annually	All bikes should be checked immediately prior to use by school and coaching staff
Maintenance and suitability of the track	Staff, participants, onlookers **At risk of**: Sprains, cuts, bruises, slips and falls	☐ Ensure that the surface is suitable and free from any sharp objects, obstacles and pot-holes. Cone off if unavoidable ☐ Use a brush to clear any broken glass or similar debris from area before the activity begins ☐ Participants must be briefed about which space they are allowed to use. This should be coned for clear indication.	Extra care should be taken in severe weather conditions (see below)	Daily site manager checks Staff to inspect the location prior to the session and make suitable
Participants	Staff, other participants and onlookers **At risk of:** Sprains, cuts, bruises, slips and falls	☐ Under 16s must have consent from parent/guardian; the school should manage this. ☐ Staff to assess the participant skill level and confidence. ☐ Participants to walk bikes over to area being used. ☐ Correct braking technique should be discussed before any riding takes place and practised if needed. ☐ Activities to be designed according to the skill level and confidence of the participants. Participants not to be pushed too hard and only ride within their capabilities. If a participant doesn't want to do something due to the	Parental consent letters have been sent out. Helmets must be worn whilst taking part in this session Skills sessions to be completed before moving onto more	School to inform parents and manage consent prior to session. School staff and coaches to monitor participants and implement controls during session.

		lack of skill they shouldn't feel pressured to perform the activity. ☐ Progressive skills training to be used. ☐ Any person who is judged to be unsuitable to participate in the bike skills will be excluded from the activity ☐ Participants encouraged to remove watches and jewellery to prevent it being caught/damaged and causing injury themselves or other participants ☐ If participants wear glasses, suggest that they are worn on a cord/chain to prevent them from dropping to the ground. ☐ Follow the agreed helmet policy for the establishment where the session is taking place. ☐ Advise that participants have access to sufficient drinking water and are wearing suitable clothing. Advise participants to wear gloves or mitts if they are available. ☐ Staff should check for any medical conditions before the session and be aware of any special arrangements. Participants to be monitored throughout assessing fitness levels and watching out for signs of fatigue alongside existing medical conditions. Asthma inhalers to be brought out with participants who need them. ☐ Ensure access to medical information and emergency contact details if required. ☐ Collisions to be avoided by ensuring participants use the agreed direction of travel. They must also leave adequate breaking distance between other riders to minimise the risk of riding into the back of someone. Max number of participants is 16 per session	advanced techniques and free riding School staff will monitor behaviour and students will be returned to school if behaviour standards are not met Remind children: • Good listening skills • Ability to follow instructions • Awareness of surroundings and where their group/leader is at all times	
Weather	Participants, Spectators, Parents **At risk of:** sunburn, dehydration, exposure, hypothermia, being struck by blown objects	☐ Avoid prolonged working in direct sunlight. ☐ Take breaks in shaded areas if possible when hot ☐ Participants instructed to bring water out with themselves to avoid dehydration ☐ Provide sunscreen as necessary to prevent sunburn. ☐ Participants instructed to bring appropriate clothing to weather conditions ☐ Session to be cancelled in event of snow/ice/heavy rain/heavy winds or extreme weather ☐ Location to be free from standing water	Students to be advised of the potential cold conditions and will be encouraged to wear gloves as well as thick coats	Weather checked day before session and monitored throughout by staff in charge

Signed: …… Date: ……

(Group Leader)

Signed: …… Date: ……

(Headteacher)