

# Bikes in Schools



*The Bike On New Zealand Charitable Trust (CC44779) is a registered charity whose main objective is to enable all New Zealand children to ride a bike on a regular and equal basis within school, through its national 'Bikes in Schools' programme. Since the first Bikes in Schools project was opened by the Prime Minister John Key in 2010, the Trust has worked with or assisted over 65 other schools throughout New Zealand to implement Bikes in Schools*

## WHY BIKES IN SCHOOLS?

Over the last 25 years there has been a dramatic fall in biking by New Zealand children which has resulted in many children not being able to experience “the joy of biking” and the many positive social and health impacts that result from biking regularly. Around 30% of all children now do not have access to a bike.

## WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES?

By helping to provide a complete biking package to schools, the Trust believes this is the most cost effective, time efficient and low-risk way to provide a wide range of positive economic and social outcomes to an entire school and wider community. These include:

- Improved health
- Cycle skills
- Increased Fitness
- Supports cycle behaviour change

## WHAT IS IN THE PACKAGE?

The complete package delivered varies according to each school's requirements, but typically a combination of:

- a fleet of 30 to 50 new bikes
- a bike helmet for every child
- combination of riding, pump and bike skills tracks
- bike storage solution (where needed)
- Cycle Skills Training

All bikes, tracks and helmets are owned and maintained by the school and remain on the school property to be used as part of the school's physical (and wider) education programme. The tracks are built within the school property. The storage facility (normally a converted shipping container) is also owned by the school.

## WHY IS LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVED?

The outcomes achieved by Bikes in Schools projects support the active transport investments being made by many local councils and also match the community outcomes defined in council's Long Term Plans, such as community health and wellbeing, environmental sustainability and road safety.

## RIDING TRACK

The Riding Track is where the greatest amount of riding (distance and time) is done. This circular track usually follows the outer edge of the school's playing fields, but this varies between schools. The length can be anywhere from 200m in length up to 1km. The surface can be limesand, or an increasing number of schools are taking advantage of lower asphalt prices.

Most schools use the track for biking, walking, running and cross country. Schools with swimming pools also use it to run triathlons.



## BIKES AND HELMETS

Depending on the roll of the school, we recommend that schools purchase up to 50 bikes of four various sizes. This includes some step through bikes for older students and teachers as these are easiest and safer bikes for bigger riders to use. It's a good idea to invest in high quality bikes as they will last longer and require less maintenance. Most schools provide a helmet for every child.



## BIKE STORAGE CONTAINER

Bikes need to be stored in a safe and secure building within the school grounds, close to the actual tracks to allow easy access. Some schools are able to store the bikes in available sheds or an unused classroom. Most schools acquire a specially converted 40 foot shipping container that has two roller doors added to allow easy access for the bikes. A container usually does not require a building permit as it is not a permanent structure. Some schools have also added lighting and power outlets to their containers.



## PUMP TRACK

Many schools also choose to build a Pump Track - similar to a small BMX track, and usually the most popular and fun for children. Ridden correctly, the children don't pedal at all, but actually "pump" their bikes up and down the slopes to get around the track. This track "burns" the most calories. The size depends on what space is available but on average is 20m x 20m.



## SKILLS TRACK

The Skills Track is a looped (usually) limestone track that takes the rider over a series of obstacles, such as wooden skinnies, slalom, seesaws and other skills related activities. This track is often the most challenging and needs the rider to concentrate and ride very slowly. It is particularly good for improving hand-eye coordination, balance and control. A skills track usually occupies an area of around 10m x 30m



You can find more detail on typical designs on our website  
[www.bikesinschools.org.nz](http://www.bikesinschools.org.nz)

## Auckland Transport

Auckland Transport are supporting the Bikes in Schools programme through providing cycle skills training at Auckland schools with Bikes in School projects.

Auckland Transport's Community Transport Manager said: "We wanted to create opportunities for students to learn to cycle and experience cycling in a safe environment. It's more than a cycle track, it's about getting bikes in schools, getting children on them and teaching them the skills and confidence to ride a bike. Encouraging children to cycle is a skill for life and a healthy choice which can be carried into adulthood. We also hope that it leads to parents and caregivers exploring other recreational cycling areas together as a family outside of school hours".

The Auckland Bikes in Schools programme collaboration won the NZRA Outstanding Community Recreation Programme Award in 2013. The collaboration was made up of representatives from Bike On NZ, Harbour Sport, Counties Manukau Sport, Auckland Council and BikeNZ. More [here](#).



## Auckland Council

Auckland Council has awarded a significant regional sports and recreation grant to help further expand the highly successful Bikes in Schools programme throughout the area.



"Bikes in Schools introduced primary school children to regular bike riding in a safe school setting, building a new generation of savvy cyclists who gain a love of cycling for recreation" said Councillor Christine Fletcher. "Bikes in Schools already partners with the council, Auckland Transport, Auckland Regional Sports Trusts and local schools".

## Wellington City Council

Wellington City Council has fully funded three local Bikes in School projects. The funding included a fleet of new bikes and bike helmets, purpose-built bike skills tracks, bike storage facility and skills training.



West Park School, Karori West Normal School and Holy Cross School were the first three schools involved in the pilot. Councillor Andy Foster says: "This initiative is one of the ways the Council is improving road safety throughout Wellington and making the city more cycle friendly". Following this successful pilot project, WCC have allocated \$600K for the next three years to allow them to extend the scheme to more Wellington schools.

## Greater Wellington Regional Council

Greater Wellington Regional Council have recently contributed \$20,000 to two schools each in the Greater Wellington area – Pinehaven School in Upper Hutt and Tawhai School in Lower Hutt.

Pinehaven's completed project cost \$50,000 and included a looped riding track along with two skills tracks. The initial funding contribution from GWRC helped the school get the project off the ground much faster, and fits in well with the Regional Council's long standing strategy of supporting development of children's cycle skills at schools across the area. Tawhai School's tracks are due to open soon.



## Palmerston North City Council

Palmerston North City Council have given their Bikes in Schools programme a \$150,000 boost, the first part of a 10 year planned budget of \$50,000 per year towards the programme. This local contribution is expected to stretch twice as far because changes to NZTA funding criteria are likely to see the council's contribution matched by a subsidy.



Terrace End, St Mary's and Longburn Schools were selected for the scheme this year after Councillor Aleisha Rutherford convinced other councillors to speed up spending on the scheme. Councillor Rutherford said that council's contribution to create the tracks was "ridiculously cheap" compared to many things the council did, and created enduring recreational opportunities for communities that did not have a lot.

PNCC's councillor Chris Teo-Sherrell said the programme was incredibly successful and a good example of the value of councils and schools entering partnerships for community good. "Given the benefits for the health and wellbeing of children, it is one of the most important things we can contribute to" he said.

### New Zealand Government

Prime Minister John Key opened the first Bikes in School track in Hastings in 2010.

John Key says: “We think it is a great idea. It’s a great way of introducing kids to bikes and making sure every young New Zealander gets an opportunity to learn to ride a bike. So it’s a programme we would like to see extended to other schools and it’s certainly going to make sure we’ve got fitter, healthier, more engaged young people”. You can see the full video of the Prime Minister talking about Bikes in Schools [here](#)

### New Zealand Transport Agency



The NZ Transport Agency is helping to encourage more children to bike more often and become more proficient in

basic cycle skills by contributing funding to the nationwide Bikes in Schools programme.

Transport Minister Simon Bridges says making cycling a safer, more reliable transport option is a core priority. “Over the next few years the Government will invest \$500,000 in helping to bring cycle projects to fruition in 35 to 40 schools. We want to help support schools to be part of the Bikes in Schools programme to encourage all children to ride a bike regularly”.

In addition to contributions to qualifying schools within UCP areas, council supported Bikes in Schools programmes are also eligible for NZTA subsidy as part of a council walking and cycling behaviour change programme.



## Accident Compensation Corporation



ACC is investing in ‘Bikes in Schools’ to help more children safely enjoy the benefits of being a regular bike rider. It is supporting a three year programme to help deliver the project to schools across the country.



“By supporting Bikes in Schools, ACC has the opportunity to reach children with important road safety and other injury prevention messages” says ACC.

Bikes in Schools currently teaches safety tips such as choosing the right helmet and bike, checking tyres and brakes and safe starting and stopping.

## Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education is supporting Bikes in Schools through a recent change in how schools can use their capital funding to support building cycle tracks. Schools’ capital funding can now meet up to 50 per cent of the costs of the tracks with the schools funding the other half themselves.



Associate Education Minister Nikki Kaye says: “There are already at least 15 schools that have taken up the Bikes in Schools programme and we want more schools to be able to create safe ways of learning the basics of cycling and promotion general exercise. This can be difficult for schools in built up cities, for example, primary schools in central Auckland”.

## ENDORSEMENTS FOR BIKES IN SCHOOLS

**Hon John Key, Prime Minister**

“ We think it is a great idea. It’s a great way of introducing kids to bikes and making sure every young New Zealander gets an opportunity to learn to ride a bike so it’s a programme we would like to see extended to other schools and it’s certainly going to make sure we’ve got fitter, healthier, more engaged young people



**Hon Nikki Kaye MP  
Associate Education Minister**

“ We know that cycle tracks have numerous benefits, including helping to develop safe cycling habits and building up confidence and fitness. I want to make it easy for schools that want to promote exercise to engage students in lifelong healthy habits that also help with their learning.



**Cindy Walsh  
Principal, Takapuna Primary School**

“ We’re getting children to be active and helping increase their physical fitness and health

**Gene Bartlett  
Deputy Principal, Lakeview School**

“ The kids are loving it and enjoying the responsibility of helping others. What’s been really encouraging for me is that we are seeing leadership skills in some of our senior kids that perhaps we didn’t realise



## WHY SUPPORT BIKES IN SCHOOLS?

The research suggests that kids who ride are **adults who ride** ✓

It creates a strong context for school travel planning –  
increasing the **return on investment** in this activity ✓

These projects easily attract **positive media attention** for cycling. ✓

It addresses **equity issues** that may otherwise be lacking in local  
government programmes ✓



It is a low risk, **proven programme**, delivering visible outcomes quickly. ✓

It **overcomes barriers** to schools delivering cycle skills training. ✓

It fosters **positive cycling attitudes** with teachers, parents and the wider  
community. ✓

[www.bikesinschools.org.nz](http://www.bikesinschools.org.nz)