

10 January 2020



Dear Parents, Carers and Students

re: **Bicycle and Road Safety**

This academic year we have seen a notable increase in the number of students travelling to and from college by bicycle, indeed, we have had made extra bicycle racks available due to the number of bikes being stored. This should be something to be celebrated and encouraged because there are many benefits to the individual and to the environment.

However this increase has, unfortunately, led to a high number of reports from the community regarding riders' lack of road safety awareness. The main problem is that riders are showing a disregard for the safety of themselves and others by performing tricks, such as 'wheelies', both on the road and in areas meant for pedestrians. However we have also had reports of 'near misses' as cyclists have veered out into the road from between parked cars. The danger is increased as the majority of riders are not wearing cycling helmets (fewer than 5% of students who ride bikes to school are currently wearing a helmet). We are also seeing these behaviours taking place directly outside of school, in the car-parks and the lanes used to access the college site.

When approached, most riders have shown a disregard for the dangerous behaviour they are displaying and the impact it may have upon themselves and others. This has included being rude to members of the public when asked to be more careful. This is clearly unacceptable.

I am asking for your support, as parents and members of this community, to help improve the awareness and safety of our students and those around them.

If your child travels to school, or elsewhere, on a bicycle:

- Please ensure that they **wear a cycling helmet** and that their bike is road-worthy. **Students will now not be permitted to store their bike on college premises unless they wear a helmet when riding.**
- Please speak to them about how to ride their bike safely and legally.
- Please explain to them that dangerous behaviour, such as performing tricks on their bike and weaving in and out of cars, is unacceptable.
- Please take responsibility for ensuring that they are as safe as possible and encourage them to do the same.

It is important to note that some of our cyclists do ride safely; I hope that those who have not will make better choices. The College behaviour policy makes clear that behaviours on the way to and from school, and those exhibited whilst wearing College uniform will be addressed through the College sanctions system. Sanctions will be imposed upon those who continue to ride their bikes irresponsibly.

Thank you for your support with this very important issue.

Yours sincerely

Alex Newton
Principal