RIDING TO SCHOOL POLICY

AUTHORS:
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IMPLEMENTATION DATE:
May 11, 2009.

REFERENCE:
NSW DET Policies: Transport.

RATIONALE:
It is a privilege for students to ride a bicycle / scooter to school. It is also important for staff, parents and carers to draw a student’s attention to issues and rules regarding children riding to and from Merimbula Public School.

Young people are vulnerable when riding a bicycle / scooter. For example:

- They are easily distracted
- They have a limited concentration span
- They are unable to deal with sudden changes and may act without thinking.
- They have a limited concept of danger.
- Their peripheral (side) vision is not fully developed.
- Their balance and motor skills are still developing.
- They are not seen easily by other traffic.

AIMS:
For students to travel to school safely, whether it be by private or public transport, walking or by alternative modes of transport such as riding a bicycle or scooter.

Students wishing to ride to school, and store their bikes safely on school grounds, will complete a Riding To School Permission Slip stating that both the student and their caregiver(s) have read and understood the policy and that the student will endeavour to abide by it at all times when travelling to and from Merimbula Public School.

CRITERIA FOR RIDING:
Students are to follow the legal requirements listed in this policy, as well as all other road rules:

- **Legal Requirements:** The NSW Traffic Act recognises bicycles as legal road vehicles with equal rights (and responsibilities) to use the road. Bicycles are required to obey all road rules and traffic signals.
- **Helmets:** All riders of bicycles and scooters must wear a Standards Australia approved helmet.
- **Riding On The Footpath:** Riders under 12 years, and older riders accompanying them, may ride on the footpath unless specifically prohibited by signs.
- **Riding On The Road:** Cyclists 12 years and over cannot use the footpath unless it is signposted as a shared footpath. Cyclists 12 years and over are required to use roads or cycle ways. Bicycle lanes are to be used when present. Bicycles must have a bell fitted and effective brakes. If used at night, bicycles must also have rear lights and a rear reflector.
- **Storage:** All bikes and scooters are to be stored, once at school, on the bicycle racks located beside the equipment area. Bicycles and scooter are to be walked to and from this area when on school grounds. Bicycle racks are out of bounds during school hours.

- **Skateboarding:** Students skateboarding to school are also to abide by this policy. Students riding skateboards should follow local signage rules when not on school grounds.

- **Safety Advice:** Helmets of the correct size must be worn and securely fastened.

**SPECIAL NOTES:**

Students are to demonstrate responsible and safe behaviour at all times when riding to and from school. Riders should not pose a hazard either to themselves or other riders, drivers or pedestrians.

It is recommended that riders younger than 10 years are closely supervised by a caregiver whenever they ride. They should not ride near busy roads, driveways and cars if possible. Riders are also encouraged to consider using additional equipment such as flags, reflectors and bright clothing to make themselves more visible to traffic.

Where possible riders should walk their bike / scooter across roads when crossing and also use appropriate hand signals when turning.

Students who fail to follow this school policy may lose the privilege of bringing their bike on school premises. Unsafe riding behaviour will also result in identified student’s parents / carers being contacted by the school Bicycle Coordinator and / or Principal.

**CONCLUSION:**

As a result of the above information, the following guidelines apply at Merimbula Public School:

- Children in Years 3 to 6 are permitted to ride their bicycles to and from school.
- Children must have parental permission whether riding to school on one occasion or everyday.
- Children should be proficient in riding and must obey all road rules.
- Children must wear a fastened approved helmet at all times.
- Children are to ride in single file only and others cannot be doubled (or dinked), even with the use of pegs.
- Upon arriving at school, and when leaving, riders will walk their bicycles / scooters when on school grounds. Bicycle racks are out of bounds during school hours.
- Riders who do not follow these rules will be asked not to ride to school for their own safety. Contact will be made with parents, in regards to this matter.

**EVALUATION:**

This policy will be evaluated by the Occupational Health and Safety Committee on an annual basis.
Dear Parent / Grandparent / Caregiver,

Your child has indicated that he/she is interested in riding their bike / scooter to school at some stage within this calendar year. As a result they will be attending the Merimbula Public School’s Riding To School Information Session.

At the information session your child:
- Will read and discuss the school’s Riding To School Policy AND
- Talk about bike and scooter safety including: maintaining a safe vehicle, following the road rules and wearing a helmet.

Please read through the school’s policy with your child and support us in addressing their safety. In accord with the NSW Traffic Act, the Department’s Transport Policy and our school’s Riding To School Policy we hope to support the safety of your child and request that both you and your child agree to the following:

**Criteria:** All MPS bike and scooter riders will:

- follow and obey all road rules
- wear a Standards Australia approved helmet that is the correct size and is fastened appropriately
- ride in a safe manner and may ride on the footpath unless aged 12 and/or signs say not to
- check that their bike has a bell fitted and ensure that it has effective brakes
- store bikes / scooters at the bicycle racks located beside the equipment area
- walk bikes / scooters when on school grounds
- line up at the bike line and wait for the supervising teacher to tell him/her when to cross the busy roads surrounding the school of an afternoon

Students will not:

- **double or dink other students**

Thank you for your support and for helping to ensure that our school is a safe place,

Mrs Michelle Hulme
Principal

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**RIDING TO SCHOOL PERMISSION 2011**

Dear Mrs Hulme,

**Student:** I ___________________________ of class __________ have read the Riding To School Policy and agree to follow it. I understand that failure to do so may result in me not being able to ride to school.

Signed: _____________________________ Name: _____________________________ Date: _______

**Parent:** My child and I have read through the Riding To School Policy. We have discussed and understand that failure to comply with the Riding To School Policy and related criteria may result in my child being asked not to ride to school for their own safety. I understand that I will be contacted if my child is in breach of this policy. My child agrees to follow the criteria and Riding To School Policy.

Signed: _____________________________ Name: _____________________________ Date: _______