

South Dunedin Cycling Project

Fast forward five years, with new routes and cycle safety training place in place, and things are starting to change.

March 2016 - Term One



Welcome to the fourth edition.

Welcome to the fourth edition of the South Dunedin Cycling Project (SDCP) newsletter.

Last year we delivered cycle skills training and led rides to 1,234 students in South Dunedin. Grade One cycle skills training teaches the basics of cycling while Grade Two takes students out of the school grounds to practise in “live” road situations. A led ride is a mentored ride which extends and develops the skills on the new cycle network and surrounding roads. Evaluation shows that students who participate in skills training significantly improve their knowledge of cycling-related laws and rules.

This year we are working with seven schools: Bayfield and Queen’s High Schools, Tahuna Normal Intermediate and Bathgate Park, Carisbrook, Musselburgh and Tainui Primary Schools.

This edition of the newsletter contains stories about what’s happening to cycling numbers in the South Dunedin and about how Musselburgh School is reaching the community with its Bikes in Schools project.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition and we welcome your feedback and input.

Charlotte Flaherty - South Dunedin Cycling Project



Musselburgh builds school bike track

Under the warmth of the summer sun in Term Four, Musselburgh Primary School opened a specifically built bike skills track on the school property. The school had an area of the playground which was underused and looking rather sad. The school trustees, staff and students put their heads together to think about how they could use the space and came up with the idea of building a bike skills track for students and the community to use.

Principal Debbie Smith explains how the project came about.

“The Year 5 and 6 children had been part of the DCC Bike Skills trial for the past three years. Through this excellent initiative the children have developed and enhanced their bike skills, gained confidence on their bikes, developed knowledge of road safety and how to use the local bike infrastructure in South Dunedin. The next step for our school was to maintain the children’s skills and confidence levels” she says.

“At the same time there was an area of the playground needing development so, putting these two factors together, the staff and School Council came up with the idea of building a bike skills track - with support from the Bikes in Schools Charitable Trust, the PTA and the Board of Trustees.”

“This project has been a real community effort, with support coming from local nurseries, contractors and our university. We could not have completed this project without the help of six University of Otago students who volunteered to build the track and obstacles, as part of their undergraduate management studies.”

Paul McArdle, of the Bikes in Schools Charitable Trust, made a donation of 10 cycles and helmets to the school.

“The School Council is looking at ways of using the new bikes and the bike track during day. The track is already being used as part of our Golden time activities which is helping to sustain the bike skills and confidence levels the children have learned through the SDCP.” says Debbie.

The community too is using the track. “During the holidays lots of families were using it which was great to see.”

Musselburgh School profile:

The under-used and forlorn area of playground before work started (top); the bike track was opened with a blessing and karakia by Whaea Jenny Donaldson and Whaea Lisa Switalla (middle); students ride the new track (bottom)

More students cycling to school

Schools in South Dunedin are reporting an increase in numbers cycling to school.

In 2011 between 3% and 7% of students cycled to one of Tahuna Normal, Tainui or Musselburgh Schools, although up to 24% wanted to get to school by bike.

Parents weren't so keen on their children cycling and major barriers for them were lack of infrastructure and lack of safety training.

Fast forward five years, with new routes and cycle safety training in place, and things are starting to change.

"Over the past two years we have noticed a significant increase in the number of students using the newly built cycleways to travel to and from school" says Tony Hunter, Principal of Tahuna Normal Intermediate.

"Students have the option to bike, scooter or skate to school and are encouraged to make the most of the health benefits of being physically active" he says.

"More students are using wheels to get to school," says Shelley Wilde, Principal of Tainui School, where numbers who "wheel" to school have increased from 13% in 2011 to 29% in February 2016.

"The safer and more pleasant option of using the cycleways has given children and parents a choice they previously didn't have. This, in combination with the Cycle Skills programme, has resulted in the very pleasing increase in use of bikes, scooters and skateboards," says Shelley.

"We've definitely noticed greater confidence levels in children, and more enthusiasm. They love it. This is shown in a huge uptake in Walk'n'Wheel Week" says Debbie Smith, Principal of Musselburgh School.

"We are into our third year of the Dunedin City Council (DCC) Cycle Skills Training with our Year 7 Students at Tahuna and this has had a big impact on numbers biking to school as the programme ensures students have the appropriate skills and confidence to bike safely to school each day" says Tony.

"As part of this programme we also map out the best routes to take from home to school... This contributes to the growth in bike use in this area."

The Tahuna school council provides free hire of safety vests for all students who cycle or scooter to school and the expectation is that these are worn at all times.

"The children are using the new infrastructure as the led rides show them where and how to go" says Debbie. Musselburgh School has noticed a bigger uptake of cycling during bike skills week and this is sustained until winter sets in.

DCC cycle counters show numbers of cyclists have increased from 110 per week along Victoria Road in 2013 to 750 per week in September 2015.



Planned for Terms One & Two 2016

Cycle Skills Training is taking place in:

- Musselburgh
- Carisbrook
- Queen's
- Bayfield

Follow up rides are scheduled for:

- Carisbrook
- Tahuna
- Queen's
- Bayfield
- Bathgate Park

Introductory mountain-biking and BMX-ing:

- Queen's

SDCP Model of Progression for the Development of Cycling Skill-sets

STAGE 1:

Fundamental skill-sets
(Cycle Skills Training Programme)

STAGE 2:

Embedding of skill-sets
(Follow-up led rides & activities)

STEP 3:

Development of sport skill-sets
(Introductory MTBing/BMXing sessions)

The South Dunedin Cycling Project is proudly sponsored by:



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