Learning to ride a bike: a qualitative study of cycling and the Bikeability programme

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Abstract

This paper demonstrates the evolving nature of qualitative field research and is structured upon themes emerging from the data. Following an initial critique of concepts, data was collected progressively at Bikeability training events in a primary school through observations of cycling practice, interviews with parents and questionnaires with children. The research developed from an initial curiosity about cycle training and its effectiveness to reduce accident rates, progressing to investigating parents’ attitudes to Bikeability and whether the cycle training has a positive effect on children’s learning experience, not least their ability ride a bicycle. The researcher also discovered that Bikeability has potential to improve a child’s understanding of a range of concepts encountered across the school curriculum such as mechanical understanding and forces, as well as developing self-confidence, vigilance and awareness to be safe on the roads. Interestingly, it was observed that varying degrees of parental support for Bikeability had a significant effect on children’s ability, interest levels and cycling habits than first anticipated.

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Refbacks

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while crossing the road. Charlie Alliston, who killed Mrs Briggs while riding a bike with no front brakes, was convicted under a Victorian law. Although many more people are killed by drivers each year than cyclists, two pedestrians died and 96 were seriously injured after being hit by a bicycle in 2015. What is Bikeability? Level One - learning to ride while cycling off the road and away from traffic - including mastering pedalling, turning, braking, using gears and looking around you.