At Umina Beach Public School, we understand that many families live within cycling distance to our school and choose to ride to and from school. Cycling can have many benefits, especially when parents and children to ride together. The DoE recommends that Parents and carers should ride in safe places until they are at least 10 years old. Safe places to ride are off-road areas away from vehicles and driveways. When families decide their child can ride their bike independently to school, it is important to be aware of safety. Please read the important reminders below:

**Important reminders for parents/carers:**

* [**NSW department of education**](https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/safe-travel/riding-safely-to-and-from-school#:~:text=Children%20under%208%20years%20old,with%20them%20on%20the%20footpath.)reminds parents and carers that they are responsible for their child’s safety when travelling to and from school.
* Road safety experts recommend your child should be at least 10 years old before they ride independently to school.
* **Discuss Safety Rules**: establish clear safety rules with your child. This includes knowing the road rules, wearing a well-fitted helmet, not talking to strangers.
* **Plan Safe Routes**: help your child plan a safe route to school, then practice riding the route together. Ride on the left side of the footpath and use safe places to cross the road, such as pedestrian crossings or traffic lights.
* **Show respect** to pedestrians and other cyclists.
* **Stay alert**: look out for vehicles at intersections or when crossing driveways; do not wear earphones.
* **Buddy System**: It is recommended that children ride with a friend or in groups.
* **Identify Safe Places**: identify safe places along the route where your child can go if they feel uncomfortable or need help, such as a trusted neighbour’s house or a local shop.
* **Teach Communication**: ensure your child knows how to contact you or another trusted adult if they need assistance. This could mean having a mobile phone or knowing important phone numbers.
* **Be cautious**: Have conversations with your child about the importance of being cautious around strangers, especially if someone offers them a lift or tries to engage them in conversation. If a situation feels uncomfortable or unsafe, they should seek help from a trusted adult or head to a safe location.
* **Communicate with us:** if your child experiences any interaction in which they feel unsafe or uncomfortable when riding to or from school, please contact us so that we can provide support and reassurance for your child.

**When should your child ride independently to school:**

If your child is travelling independently to school, make sure they are able to manage the unpredictability of an ever-changing traffic environment. Make sure your child knows and can follow the road rules for cyclists and pedestrians and they understand and can recognise potential dangers. Children should ride in a group and know how to seek assistance, if needed.

For any questions or further assistance, please contact the school office.

**Umina Beach Public School**
**0243 411630**

***Umina-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au***