

Our Ref: JB/RF
Your Ref:

12 April 2013

Department for Education,
Consultation Unit,
Area 1c,
Castle View House,
East Lane,
Runcorn,
Cheshire,
WA7 2GJ

Dear Sir or Madam,

REFORM OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN ENGLAND

pteg represents the six Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs) - the strategic transport bodies which between them serve more than eleven million people in Greater Manchester (Transport for Greater Manchester), Merseyside (Merseytravel), South Yorkshire (SYPTe), Tyne and Wear (Nexus), the West Midlands (Centro) and West Yorkshire (Metro). We are also a wider professional network for Britain's largest urban transport authorities.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the consultation on 'Reform of the National Curriculum in England' and, in particular, the proposed physical education curriculum. Within the proposed curriculum, we would like to see the inclusion of a requirement to provide national standard Bikeability cycle training for primary school children. This would complement existing requirements relating to swimming and water safety.

Cycling and walking are among the cheapest, most accessible and most effective ways of encouraging physical activity. They are activities that people of all ages are able to easily incorporate into their daily routines, meaning they are more likely to keep up the habit in the long term. As such, cycling and walking fit with the National Curriculum aims for all pupils to be 'physically active for sustained periods of time' and to 'lead healthy, active lives'.

Providing national standard Bikeability cycle training as part of the physical education curriculum would support these core aims, helping to ensure that all children are able to cycle safely – an essential skill for active lifestyles.

As well as ensuring that all children (including those who do not thrive in competitive sport) have the skills and opportunities to be active in their daily lives, the encouragement of cycling through the curriculum has the potential to contribute to a number of other goals including:

- Reducing traffic and congestion associated with the school run as more children choose to cycle instead. Currently, nearly half of children would like to cycle to school, but only two per cent actually do, despite most journeys to primary or secondary school being well within cycling distance. Road congestion currently costs urban areas at least £11bn a year.
- Reducing public spending on school transport.
- Allowing all children to benefit from increased choice and competition in schools provision by supporting them to get around independently at minimal cost. This independent mobility also opens up opportunities to access valuable positive activities outside of school.

The reform of the National Curriculum offers an important opportunity to embed healthy, active travel habits into the daily lives of children and young people - habits that could last a lifetime. The inclusion of Bikeability training into the physical education curriculum will ensure that this opportunity is not missed.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

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