

Mountain Biking

ELEMENTARY - CURRICULAR 2025

- Consult [Disability-Centred Safety](#) if your groups of students include students with disabilities.
- Mountain Biking takes place in various off-road conditions (for example, gravel roads, ski trails, bike trails, etc).
- If mountain biking takes place on paved surfaces (for example, bike paths, roads, sidewalks), also consult [Cycling](#).
- Consult [Risk Management](#).
- The safety standards for this activity must be presented to the activity provider prior to the activity taking place. The activity provider must meet the minimum requirements listed in the safety standards. For more information on planning trips using outside providers, consult [Outside Activity Providers](#).

Equipment

- Determine that all equipment is safe (for example, no sharp corners, cracks, or splinters) and all assistive devices (e.g., a walker) are in good working condition and properly adjusted for the height and mobility needs of the student prior to participation.
- When downhill mountain biking, appropriate safety gear for the facility must be worn.
- The following statements refer to students' own, borrowed or rented equipment:
 - Students must inspect bikes before use for working brakes and properly inflated tires.

- Bicycle size must be appropriate for the rider.
- A properly fitted (as per manufacturer's guidelines) and properly worn bicycle helmet certified by a recognized safety standards association (for example, CSA, Snell, ANSI, ASTM, BSI, AS) must be worn.
- Protective eyewear (for example, sunglasses) must be worn.
- One Teacher/Monitor per group to carry:
 - a first aid kit
 - a bicycle tool kit, including a pump
 - a signalling device (for example, whistle)

Refer to the [First Aid](#) section for first aid equipment requirements.

Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery

- Appropriate clothing and footwear must be worn (for example, no baggy pants). Clothing must be adequate for outdoor activity. Open-toed shoes or sandals are not permitted.
- When long hair poses a safety risk it must be secured. Devices (for example, hair pins, elastics and barrettes) used to tie back long hair must not present a safety concern.
- Students must not participate when the length of fingernails poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

Facilities

- Determine that all facilities are safe and accessible for the students participating. Students must be encouraged to report facility problems to the teacher.
- Define specific routes to the students so they are aware of the boundaries for activity, whether using a commercial or non commercial site.
- When choosing a site the following conditions must be taken into consideration:
 - sun
 - wind
 - suitability of terrain
- Provide students with map and/or clear directions.
- Students must ride only on trails outlined by the Teacher/Monitor.
- In addition to the above, when selecting a non-commercial site, the site must include:
 - a level field with practice area
 - a long run-out at the bottom section of a larger hill
 - proximity to warmth, food and other facilities
- Prior to initial use, when riding at a non-commercial site, Teacher/Monitor must do a safety ride-through to address safety and suitability.
- For off-road routes determine that permission of the landowner is obtained.

Environmental Considerations

- When environmental conditions may pose a risk to student safety (for example, thunderstorms [lightning] or student(s) with asthma, triggered by air quality), Teachers must take into consideration their school board/school's protocols and procedures related to:
 - environmental conditions (consult [Weather](#)); and
 - insects (for example, mosquitoes and ticks [consult the school/school board's protocols and/or regional Public Health Department's website]).
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to environmental conditions and be made aware of ways to protect themselves (for example, sun burn, heat stroke, poisonous plants).
- At all times the school board's weather and insect procedures are the minimum standards. In situations where a higher standard of care is presented (for example, outside activity providers, facility/program coordinators), the higher standard of care must be followed.

Special Rules/Instructions

- Be aware of students whose medical condition (for example, asthma, anaphylaxis, casts, previous concussion, orthopaedic device) may affect participation. Consult [Medical Conditions](#).
- Students must not participate in the activity until they receive information on concussion prevention specific to the activity, inherent risks of the activity (for example, outline possible risks and ways to minimize the risks), and procedures and rules for safe play. Students must receive instruction on the importance of reporting symptoms related to a suspected concussion.
- Refer to school board policies and procedures (i.e., transportation, excursion/field trip) for communication with parents/guardians, the location of an off-site activity, means of transportation, supervision ratios, and parent/guardian permission.
- Activities must be modified according to the age, ability level, language, and experience of students, number of participants, and the facility available.
- Previous training, fitness level, and the length of time and intensity of physical activity must be taken into consideration.

- Activities must be based on skills that are taught.
- Skills must be taught in proper progression.
- A warm-up and cool-down must be included.
- While moving, students must not be required to close their eyes or be blind-folded.
- Emphasize controlled movement when requiring students to walk or run backwards. Backward-running races are not permitted.
- **Rules of the Trail for Off-Road Cycling** must be reviewed.
- Ride on open trails only. Respect road closures.
- Instruction must be given on the proper position of a bicycle helmet (for example, brow of helmet is at eyebrow level).
- Students must cycle at a speed that allows them to control their bike in a safe manner.
- Students must be encouraged to anticipate other trail users, especially around corners, and establish communication, be prepared to stop if necessary, and pass safely.
- Before going on mountain bike trails, students must demonstrate (to the Teacher/Monitor) competency in:
 - stopping
 - changing gears
 - turning
 - going up and down hills in control
 - negotiating obstacles

- Teacher/Monitor must select routes/trails suitable to students' demonstrated ability.
- If rider is using clips on their pedals, they must demonstrate to the Teacher/Monitor competency with their use during initial instruction.
- Clips must be removed prior to going on trails if student cannot demonstrate competency in their use.
- Communicate to students the importance of being aware of the location of other riders, around them, to avoid interference and collisions.
- Emphasis must be placed on controlled riding.
- Students must be aware of an emergency procedure in case of an accident.
- Students must be informed that at any sign of difficulty they must get off their bikes and walk their bikes until it is safe to resume riding.
- All riders must ride in groups of 3.
- If a person gets hurt, one person goes for help and the other stays with the injured individual.
- For non-commercial sites, a record of students and the route they will be travelling must be left in the school with an appropriate person.
- Racing must not be done as an in-class activity.
- No audio devices (for example, MP3 players) may be used.
- When a student displays hesitation (verbally or non-verbally) with participating, the Teacher must determine the reason(s) for doubt. If the Teacher believes that a potential hesitancy during the skill could put the student at risk, the student must be directed toward a more basic skill, or be permitted to select a role within the activity at their comfort level, including the choice to not participate.

- Prior to participation, the Teacher must reference and apply their school board's policy on equity and inclusion as it affects student participation and makes appropriate accommodations/modifications to provide a safe learning environment. Consult the Intent subsection within the [About section](#).
- Adequate liquid replacement (personal water bottles, water fountains) must be accessible for students before, during, and after physical activity to prevent dehydration.

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised.
- The type of supervision must be commensurate with the inherent risk of the activity. The level of risk is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, and environmental conditions.
- On-Site Supervision is required during the safety and initial skill instruction.
- On-Site Supervision is required for the duration of all other components of the activity (e.g., equipment setup and take down, warm-ups/cool downs, application of the skills and games).
- In-the-Area Supervision is required where the skill application of the activity takes place at a separate location from the Teacher (e.g., students mountain biking on trails).
- A Volunteer, under the direction of a Teacher, can monitor students during physical education activities. Refer to your school board's policy on Volunteers assisting with students' physical activities.
- Responsibilities must be clearly outlined for additional Teachers and Volunteers who are monitoring the activity.
- Where a Qualified Instructor is used and the Teacher is not directly with the Qualified Instructor, the Qualified Instructor must provide safety and initial skill instruction, and monitoring for the safe application of skills and student behaviour for the duration of the activity.
- A Teacher who is providing instruction and is unfamiliar with the activity (for example, no recent experience) must refrain from teaching the activity until assistance is provided by an appropriately trained staff or training is received.

Supervision Ratios

- Ratio for Initial Instruction:
 - Primary: 1 Teacher per 4 students
 - Junior: 1 Teacher per 10 students
 - Intermediate 1 Teacher per 12 students
- After initial instruction, in-the-area supervision is required.
- Ratio After Initial Instruction:
 - Primary: 1 Teacher per 6 students
 - Junior: 1 Teacher per 12 students
 - Intermediate 1 Teacher per 15 students

Qualifications

- If using an Qualified Instructor from an Outside Activity Provider:
 - they must be trained in, understand, demonstrate and adhere to a directly relevant skill set for Mountain Biking. A relevant skill set is a described set of skills as recognized by mountain biking professionals (for example, the Professional Mountain Biking Instructor Association (PMBIA)).
 - All Qualified Instructors must be at least 18 years of age or older to teach the introductory lesson and/or be a Qualified Instructor.

First Aid

- At least one Teacher/Monitor responsible for providing first aid must have current First Aid qualifications equivalent to or exceeding St. John Ambulance Emergency First Aid with CPR Level C + AED.
- A fully stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. (Consult [Sample First Aid Kit](#))
- A working communication device (for example, cell phone) must be accessible.
- Follow the school's first aid emergency response ((consult [First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response](#)) and the school board's concussion protocol (consult [Concussions](#)).
- An emergency action plan and response to deal with evacuations and lockdowns, including specific direction for participants with accessibility needs, must be followed and communicated to all students.☒

Definitions

- **In-charge Person:**
 - Some activities refer to an "In-Charge" person. While the teacher is in-charge and responsible for the overall safety and well-being of students under their care, sometimes there are other personnel who must be identified as "In-Charge" related to specific situations (for example, a pool lifeguard). In activities where an "In-Charge" person is designated, that person, in consultation with the teacher, must make final decisions regarding safety of the students
- **Monitor:**
 - An individual who assists the Teacher with a group of students, (e.g., Volunteer, Qualified Instructor) and has a responsibility to monitor student behaviors for the duration of the activity.
- **Monitoring:**
 - The role of monitoring is to observe, identify, act, and report:

- Observe: Observe with attention to detail the actions of the students.
- Identify: Identify the student and the unsafe behaviour.
- Act: Take appropriate actions to safeguard students and others (e.g., stop the activity).
- Report: Provide the name of the student and the unsafe behaviour to the teacher for management and direction.

- **Outside Activity Provider:**

- A commercial company, volunteer organization, or individual, not associated with the school board, who possess the required qualifications to provide safety and initial skill instruction, and monitoring for the duration of an activity.

- **Qualified Instructor:**

- An individual who provides safety and skill instruction, and monitoring for an activity, and possesses the required qualifications (e.g., experience, certifications). This role could be fulfilled by a teacher, volunteer, or an employee of an outside provider. An instructor does not have the authority to supervise.

- **Supervision:**

- The vigilant overseeing of an activity for management or direction. Activities, facilities, and equipment have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.
- The Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education includes three Types of supervision, Direct Supervision, On-Site Supervision, and In-the-Area Supervision. These types of supervision take into consideration the level of risk, which is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, the environmental conditions, the age, and developmental stage.
- The three types of supervision described are not hierarchical but represent the type of supervision that activities require and the type of supervision that is inherently possible.

- Some activities in OPASSE transition from one type of supervision to another type of supervision (e.g., Direct Supervision to On-Site Supervision OR On-Site Supervision to In-the-Area Supervision).

- **Teacher:**

- A person with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school/school board (i.e., teacher, vice-principal, principal). This person is legally responsible for the students and has the authority and responsibility to supervise.

- **Types of Supervision:**

- **Direct Supervision:**

- Direct Supervision requires that the Teacher is physically present at the activity, providing visual and verbal oversight for management and direction of both, the activity and student safety.

- **Provisos:**

- No other activity can occur when part of the activity or the entire activity is under Direct Supervision when there is only one Teacher supervising.
 - The Supervision section of the relevant activity safety standards page in the Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education describes when parts of an activity are under Direct Supervision.
 - Where a Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring for one activity and requires the Teacher to be present at that activity for management and direction.

- An activity may be under Direct Supervision:

- During the entire duration of the activity;
 - During the set up and take down of equipment; .
 - During the safety and initial skill instruction;

- During the performance/practice of the activity skill; and
- When the activities transition from Direct Supervision to On-Site Supervision.

○ **In-the-Area Supervision:**

- The Teacher is located in proximity to a combination of locations where the student activities take place, is circulating, and is accessible for providing management and direction of the physical activity and student safety.
 - Provisos:
 - The Teacher is circulating between the activities occurring at separate locations, and is readily accessible, or the location of the Teacher is communicated to the student.
 - Where a Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and skill and instruction and is monitoring at a combination of locations, the Teacher is located in proximity to where the student activities take place, is circulating between the activity locations, and is accessible for management and direction.
 - Students may be out of sight for periods of time.
- An activity or a component of the activity is under In-the-Area Supervision:
 - Where the same activity is located in separate locations (e.g., Fitness activities);
 - Where two or more activities under In-the-Area Supervision occur in separate locations (e.g., Badminton, Table Tennis, Handball (Wall));
 - Where the skill application of the activity takes place at a separate location from the teacher (e.g., Cross Country Running, Skiing (Alpine), Cycling, hiking on trails);
 - When the activities occur in double or triple gymnasiums; and

- Where more than one Qualified Instructor is providing activities at a combination of locations.

- **On-Site Supervision:**

- The Teacher is present at one location where the student activity takes place (e.g., gymnasium, sports field, climbing wall at an Outside Activity Provider's facility, campsite) and is accessible for providing management and direction of the physical activity and student safety.
 - **Provisos:**
 - Where more than one activity occurs in one location, the Teacher is circulating between the activities and is accessible for management and direction.
 - Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (e.g., equipment room, outdoor storage shed, boathouse, staff tent) is considered to be On-Site Supervision.
 - Where a Qualified Instructor(s) is providing the safety and initial skill instruction and monitoring for an activity or a combination of activities at one location and the Teacher is present and is circulating and accessible for management and direction.
 - An activity may be under On-Site Supervision:
 - During the entire duration of the activity;
 - During the safety and initial skill instruction;
 - With activities using multiple stations while the Teacher is circulating;
 - When combining two or more activities at one location while the Teacher is circulating; and
 - When activities transition from On-Site Supervision to In-the-Area Supervision.

- **Volunteer:**

- A responsible adult (e.g., Educational Assistants, Retired Teachers, Co-op Students, Parents/Guardians, Teacher Candidates) approved by the Principal/Designate who is under the direction of a Teacher and has been instructed on their monitoring responsibilities. Refer to your school board's policy on volunteers assisting with student's physical activities.

Last Published

Tue, 07/22/25 12:30 pm