

Off-road motorbikes



Staying safe and legal when off-roading



Off-road motorcycles, quad bikes, mini motos and go-peds are regularly bought and ridden off-road in North Yorkshire. However, many parents and young people are unaware of the safety aspects, responsibilities of owning such machines and the laws surrounding them.

Advice for parents

If you buy a motorbike or quad bike for your child, it is important to be aware that you are responsible for that young person and their actions.

If a young person rides a bike on a road or on public land it is a legal requirement that they have insurance. You may also be prosecuted for permitting your child to ride on a road or public place and this will affect your own car or bike insurance.

When buying your child a quad bike or motorbike, please consider the following advice:

- Think carefully before buying a machine
- Consider your personal responsibilities as you can be prosecuted if you are irresponsible
- Look into joining an organised motorbike group
- Always get personal permission from the owner of private land
- Contact the council for a list of areas which you can ride on



The law

In law, off-road motorbikes are regarded as motor vehicles which must be constructed to a specific standard in order to be ridden on a public highway.

Most off-road motorbikes do not meet this standard. Visit the Department for Transport's website www.dft.gov.uk for more information.

In addition to meeting construction requirements, off-road motorbikes also need the following if they are to be used on a public highway:

- DVLA registration (log book)
- Road tax
- A valid MOT
- Fitted with lights
- Fitted with registration plates
- Type approval

The rider must also:

- Be aged 17 or over (or 16 if the vehicle meets the definition of a moped)
- Hold a valid driving licence
- Have valid motor insurance
- Wear suitable safety equipment (e.g. a motorbike helmet)

If these conditions are not met, it is illegal to ride an off-road motorbike on the road.

If you own or ride one of these vehicles it is your responsibility to know the law.

Failure to comply is a criminal offence and may result in prosecution under the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Police Reform Act 2002.

Your safety

Police regularly receive complaints concerning the anti-social use of off-road motorbikes.

Ambulances are regularly called out to children and young adults who have sustained serious injuries as a result of using these bikes illegally and without wearing any protective clothing or a helmet.

Don't let your child be the next casualty. Make sure off-road motorbikes are used safely and legally.

To reduce the harm to individuals and communities, police operations are carried out in your area with illegally-used off-road motorbikes being seized and

crushed. You can only ride an off-road motorbike legally if it is on private land and you have the land owner's permission. Land owned by the local council is not classed as private land.

Not everyone using off-road motorbikes does so illegally and there are a number of specialist sites where they can be ridden legally.



Preventing anti-social behaviour

Are off-road motorbikes causing a nuisance in your neighbourhood? Do you have any information about the use of these vehicles, where they're being ridden and by whom? Call North Yorkshire Police on 101.

If you want to provide information anonymously, contact the independent crime-fighting charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Information that can help police may include:

- The name and address of the owner of the off-road motorbike
- Where the bike is stored
- When and where the bike is being used (e.g. days, times and routes)
- Any other useful information such as a description of those who use the bike and its make/model/colour

