



Anti-Bullying Guidance and Procedures

Bullying Prevention and Management for Mackie Academy, Aberdeenshire Council

Policy Overview

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment for all people in its educational establishments. Aberdeenshire Council's Anti-Bullying Policy can be found [here](#).

At Mackie Academy, our core values are integrity, teamwork, commitment, and excellence. As a Rights Respecting School we promote these as shared values for our entire school community: pupils, staff, parents, and partners.



These expectations highlight the importance of fairness, equality, respect, and inclusion, in line with the Scottish Government's [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying \(2017\)](#) key principles.

[The Equalities Act](#) (2010) protects everyone. We all have one or more of the nine protected characteristics listed below:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (Gender)
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage and civil partnership

Therefore, it is against the law to discriminate against anyone for any of the above reasons and we at Mackie Academy will view bullying related to these characteristics as unacceptable. For more information on prejudice-based bullying, see www.respectme.org.uk/bullying/prejudice-basedbullying.

[Getting it Right for Every Child](#) shows us that we can assess the wellbeing of a young person against eight indicators.



By doing this at Mackie Academy we can support our young people to understand that bullying can directly and indirectly affect childhood development and future potential.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying in any form is a breach of Childrens' Rights as set out in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* ([UNCRC](#)).

“Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person’s capacity to feel in control of themselves. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened, or left out. This behaviour happens face-to-face and online.” *Respect Me (2015)*

Pupils at Mackie Academy have defined bullying in the following ways:

“An action which is done deliberately in order to hurt, gain power, annoy, alarm or put fear into another person. This can have an impact at any age”.

“To be classed as bullying, the actions do not need to be continual – it can happen only once”.

Expectations and Responsibilities for All

Mackie Academy's Anti bullying policy has the following aims:

- To raise awareness and understanding of the impact(s) of bullying behaviour.
- To reinforce that bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- To ensure that everyone is treated equally.
- To respond to incidents of bullying in a consistent and effective way.
- To create a comfortable and safe environment for pupils.

To achieve these aims, Mackie Academy adopts a [restorative approach](#) to relationships between all people in the school community. The aim of restorative approaches is to build community, and to manage conflict by building and maintaining relationships, and repairing the harm of wrongdoing.

How we aim to prevent bullying

The school will implement the following steps in working to **prevent** bullying behaviour:

1. We will work to **raise awareness** amongst pupils, staff, and parents/carers.
 - Create an anti-bullying culture by always promoting respectful relationships between all members of the school community.
 - Implement programmes of education about bullying from S1 transition days onwards. Revisit this topic at all stages.
 - Ensure that Mackie has visual displays relating to anti-bullying.
 - Anti-bullying work will include assemblies, class sessions and tutor time sessions. It will highlight work done during National Anti-Bullying week.
 - Opportunities will be available for parents/carers to obtain information on school systems and strategies relating to bullying and how to respond in a supportive and appropriate manner.
2. Mackie Academy will work to **educate** pupils, staff, and parents/carers about what to do when bullying behaviour is displayed, and how to support and challenge those involved.
 - Encourage pupils to teach and share key messages about bullying with other pupils and with parents/carers including the short- and long-term impact of bullying.
 - Ensure that pupils, parents/carers, and teachers are aware of support available beyond school (e.g. Childline, Samaritans, RespectMe, Police Scotland, Parentline).
 - The school will participate in planned Aberdeenshire Education and Children's Services events in order to deliver key messages relating to bullying and to support ongoing

- Within the curriculum, Mackie Academy will include work designed to boost the resilience of children and young people.
3. Mackie Academy will provide access to **training** and key information for staff.
- Staff will work in partnership with other agencies (such as social work, health, and Police Scotland) to enable all to be aware of strategies for preventing bullying.
 - Mackie Academy's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will provide updated information to all staff:
 - Provide all members of staff with access to a copy of the relevant school policy.
 - Outline the key roles and responsibilities that each member of the school community has regarding preventing bullying behaviour within the policy.
 - Staff are trained in the use of restorative approaches.
4. Mackie Academy will ensure that **communication** is at the heart of prevention strategies against bullying behaviour.
- The Anti-Bullying policy will be shared with and accessible to pupils, staff and parents/carers via the school website.
 - Pupils and parents/carers are encouraged to maintain an open dialogue with school staff about any concerns relating to bullying behaviour. School will also communicate with parents/carers if we have any concerns relating to their child.

Response to bullying incidents – strategies used:

Mackie Academy will promote consistency of **response** to instances of bullying behaviour using the 6-step approach:

1. Record the incident.
2. Discuss with the individuals involved through clear and honest dialogue.
3. Discuss with parents.
4. Use Restorative Approaches.
5. Monitor the situation.
6. Review and increase response accordingly.

Restorative Approaches will be used where possible in order to repair relationships.

The aim of restorative approaches is to build community and manage conflict by building and maintaining relationships and repairing the harm of wrongdoing.

- Restorative approaches allow pupils to meet and have open and honest discussion when issues arise.
- Restorative approaches encourage the development of self-awareness and mutually respectful relationships.
- Restorative approaches teach pupils to understand and share their emotions in a safe environment.

- Restorative meetings or mediation will always be facilitated by a suitably trained member of staff, with whom both parties are comfortable.

Taking Action:

Taking action to resolve a bullying situation must be given **high priority**. In some circumstances, immediate action may be required.

- Each situation is unique and therefore Mackie Academy will use a variety of strategies to resolve a bullying incident. An appropriate course of action will be agreed through speaking to pupils involved, and their parents/carers as appropriate.
- Discussions with the person who has displayed the bullying behaviour will be clear and honest. Through restorative approaches, efforts will be made to ensure that person understands the harm they have caused and has an opportunity to repair this harm and take responsibility for their actions.
- Ongoing support to pupils and parents/carers involved in bullying incidents will be provided by an appropriate member of staff, and we will work to ensure there is a shared understanding of the steps that have been / are being taken to address identified issues.
- It is very important that school staff monitor how relationships develop over the weeks and months that follow an incident of bullying behaviour and act if relationships do not improve.
- Appropriate responses to repeat displays of bullying behaviour will be decided on a case-by-case basis, taking account of relevant factors, and the mental/emotional wellbeing of pupils involved.

Reporting and Monitoring:

- Anti-bullying is included under the heading of Health and Wellbeing which is the responsibility of all staff, led by one member of the school's SLT.
- Roles and responsibilities of all staff will be made clear by SLT through regular updates on Aberdeenshire and National Anti-Bullying strategies.

Pupil Voice:

The school will gather pupil feedback relating to bullying behaviour in a variety of means:

- Pupil Focus Groups will be consulted on any changes to the anti-bullying policy and their views will be sought on any themes or trends in bullying behaviour.
- Information gathered through Pupil Focus Groups will be shared with SLT each term.

Statistical data forms part of the monitoring of bullying behaviour.

- The school will report the number of bullying incidents centrally using a secure electronic system in line with Aberdeenshire Council's policy.

- Statistics will not routinely be published but will be used by Aberdeenshire Council Education and Children's Services as part of ongoing monitoring and improvement.

Advice for Parents/Carers

Bullying in school

- If your child reports that they have been involved in a bullying incident during the school day then please contact your child's Pupil Support and Attainment Teacher (PSAT) for support, via phone or email.

Bullying outside school

- Incidents which take place outside the school day, even if they are between Mackie Academy pupils, are not the responsibility of the school.
- If required, these can be reported to Police Scotland via the 101 number.
- In cases where bullying incidents have taken place outside school, we would ask that parents/carers inform their child's PSAT to make us aware. This will allow us to monitor the situation between pupils in school and act if incidents occur during the school day.

Policy initiation and review dates

Anti-Bullying policies will be **evaluated regularly**:

- Evaluation should focus on the impact of this policy in school. Impact can be measured by using data and by taking account of pupil experience, the opinions of parents/carers and of Mackie Academy staff.
- Anti-Bullying policies should be revised every three years in accordance with the Aberdeenshire Council policy framework.
- This policy review was initiated on 9th January 2023 and will be reviewed on 9th January 2026