

A FAIRER AND JUST SCOTLAND



Policy 6:

The Scottish Government should take strong and decisive action to address prejudice, discrimination and bullying experienced by children and young people, in order to ensure that Scotland is a safe place to grow up.

Endorsed by:



What's this all about?

Young people have told us that bullying is not being taken seriously and is often overlooked, despite the harm it causes them, their education and their lives. Young people impacted by bullying feel they cannot attend school and that it is preventing them from being able to learn. They shared experiences of being bullied due to their religion, ethnicity, education and sexuality, and how much worse this bullying has become through wide-spread use of social media. Now, young people don't have any safe space to go because the bullying can reach them at home through their phones and online platforms. They told us that there are no repercussions for this digital harmful language and attacks.

"Bullying is a big part of childhood, it can make or break a person"

– Young woman aged 14-17, Clackmannanshire

"Creating a safe place to grow where all children feel valued is essential for development and wellbeing."

– Young woman aged 14-17, Clackmannanshire

What are young people in Scotland calling for?

- **Young people want to be included in bullying prevention strategies in schools, and for their experiences to be central to school inspection evaluations on this issue.**

“Bullying is such a huge issue that never seems to be taken seriously. in my school people get harassed for years and it's still ongoing”

– Young woman aged 14-17, Dumfries and Galloway

- **Decision makers should make bullying reporting easier and more accessible, with clear feedback loops and support for affected students.**

“When I was really young, growing up as an ethnic minority really affected me. And it affected me more that the bullying wasn’t significantly dealt with. I am happy to say, however, that in these past few years I feel that the police have really started to effectively crack down on this hate, as I hear from younger siblings and relatives.”

– Young woman aged 14-17, Edinburgh

- **The Scottish Government should hold social media platforms accountable for harmful content and invest in safe spaces and youth-led inclusion programmes to protect and empower young people.**

“Creating a safe place to grow where all children feel valued is essential for development and wellbeing. Government should implement antibullying policies and promote awareness campaigns that educate young people about inclusion and diversity”

– Young woman aged 14-17, North Ayrshire

Evidence and Support

- [Research with young people in Scotland](#) shows levels of bullying have increased and are at the highest level since data on bullying was first collected in 2002.
 - Respectme’s Youth Action Group led a two-year campaign urging adults to ‘[Listen Up](#)’ and take practical steps to address bullying and respect the rights of children and young people.
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What has SYP done?

The [SYP Policy Log](#) includes policies on prevention of bullying in schools; youth work; training for teachers; education on several issues in schools; measures to prevent anti-social behaviour