

# *Mackay House*

*Est. 1857*



## **EXPANDED PLATINUM EDITION HANDBOOK**

*1210 Chemin d'Aylmer Boarding House*  
*Policy • Safety • Student Life • Dining*

*Prepared as a comprehensive working handbook for an all-girls boarding residence.*



## Mission Statement

MacKay House is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and empowering residential environment where young women develop confidence, independence, and strong character. Through a balance of structure, care, accountability, and community, students are guided to become respectful, responsible, and engaged individuals.

## Core Values

### Respect

Every member of the community is expected to treat others, the residence, and shared property with courtesy, empathy, and consideration.

### Responsibility

Students are expected to take ownership of their actions, routines, commitments, and decisions, both within the residence and beyond it.

### Integrity

Honesty, trustworthiness, and ethical conduct are essential to boarding life. Students are expected to communicate truthfully and uphold community expectations.

### Sisterhood

MacKay House fosters belonging, inclusion, and support. Students are encouraged to build positive relationships and look out for one another.

### Growth

Boarding life is intended to support academic, personal, emotional, and social development through meaningful routines, reflection, and opportunity.

## Residence Overview

MacKay House is a three-level boarding residence with six bedrooms, several main-level exits, a second-floor balcony, and a basement apartment. The residence is designed to function as both a home and a supervised student living environment.

- Main level: primary common areas and multiple exits.
- Second floor: bedrooms and balcony access.
- Basement level: additional residential space, including an apartment and an alternate means of exit.
- One central stairwell: the primary vertical route between levels and a critical safety feature that must remain clear at all times.

## Boarding House Safety Protocols

### Access and security

- Exterior doors are to remain secured at all times.
- Students must carry keys, codes, or access credentials as required.
- Students must never permit unauthorized individuals to enter the residence.
- Lost keys, codes, or security concerns must be reported immediately to staff.

### Visitor management



- All visitors must be approved by boarding staff in advance.
- Visitors may only remain in designated common areas unless expressly authorized otherwise.
- Overnight guests are not permitted unless there is formal written approval.
- Residents are responsible for the conduct of any guest they host.

### **Sign-in and sign-out procedures**

- Students must sign out before leaving the property and sign in upon return.
- Destination, expected return time, and contact details must be accurate.
- Any change in plans must be communicated to staff immediately.
- Failure to report whereabouts is treated as a safety concern, not simply a discipline issue.

### **Curfew and supervision**

- Curfew times must be respected at all times unless a leave has been approved.
- Quiet hours are enforced to support healthy routines, rest, and academic performance.
- Staff supervision is maintained throughout the day, evening, and overnight periods.

### **Off-campus safety**

- Students are expected to use the buddy system when off property whenever possible.
- Students must use well-lit, familiar routes and avoid isolated areas.
- A charged mobile phone must be carried when students are off campus.
- Late returns or delays must be communicated to staff immediately.

### **Hazard awareness**

- Hallways, doors, and exits must remain free from clutter.
- Unsafe conditions such as spills, broken fixtures, or faulty locks must be reported immediately.
- Safety equipment, cameras, smoke alarms, and fire devices must never be tampered with.

## **Ontario-Style School Safety Standards**

This handbook incorporates common Ontario school safety practices and emergency planning principles used in schools and supervised student programs. It is intended as a practical boarding-house framework and should be read alongside any site-specific school, fire-code, or legal requirements.

- Emergency procedures should be clearly posted and practiced regularly.
- Students must understand and participate seriously in drills, emergency instructions, and staff direction.
- A safe and accepting environment includes bullying prevention, progressive discipline, supervision, and incident reporting.
- Schools and student residences should maintain procedures for fire response, lockdown, hold and secure, medical emergencies, visitor control, and parent communication.
- Bullying prevention and intervention planning is required for Ontario school boards under Policy/Program Memorandum 144, and provincial safe and accepting schools resources emphasize prevention, reporting, and support for affected students. □cite□turn991237search1□turn991237search10□
- Ontario's provincial police/school board protocol model includes procedures for lockdowns and hold-and-secure situations, including people who may be outside the building when an emergency is called. □cite□turn991237search9□
- Ontario Regulation 1101 sets workplace first-aid requirements, and Ontario guidance for school-age programs commonly expects staff to hold Standard First Aid and CPR certification. □cite□turn991237search2□turn991237search28□



## Emergency Preparedness and Response

### Fire emergency

Any fire alarm must be treated as real. Immediate evacuation is required unless staff or emergency personnel give different instructions.

### Lockdown

A lockdown is used when there is a serious threat inside the building or in the immediate vicinity that requires people to secure in place.

### Hold and secure

A hold and secure is used when there is a potential threat outside the building. Exterior doors are secured and no one enters or leaves the residence; activities inside may continue under staff direction.

### Medical emergency

Illness, injury, allergic reaction, or other medical concerns must be reported immediately. Staff will determine the appropriate response, which may include first aid, family contact, or emergency medical services.

### Severe weather or utility interruption

Students must follow staff direction in cases of severe weather, prolonged power outage, water interruption, or other building-related safety concerns.

## Fire Safety Standards and Protocol

Because MacKay House has three levels, one stairwell, several main-level exits, a second-floor balcony, and a basement apartment, the fire plan must be simple, rehearsed, and highly disciplined.

### Critical rule: the stairwell

The central stairwell is the primary evacuation route between floors. It must remain completely clear at all times. Shoes, boxes, bags, furniture, or any temporary storage are not permitted in or around the stairwell.

### Fire prevention standards

- No candles, incense, lighters, matches, or open flames are permitted in student spaces.
- No personal hot plates, kettles, toasters, rice cookers, space heaters, or similar heat-generating appliances are permitted in bedrooms.
- Outlets must not be overloaded and damaged cords must be reported immediately.
- Kitchen equipment may only be used safely and in accordance with house rules.
- Smoke detectors, alarms, extinguishers, and emergency lighting must never be tampered with.

### When the alarm sounds

- Evacuate immediately.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Close doors behind you if this can be done quickly and safely.
- Move calmly but urgently to the nearest safe exit route.
- Proceed directly to the designated outdoor assembly point.
- Do not re-enter the building until the all-clear is given by staff or emergency services.

### Evacuation by level

- Main level: use the nearest available exit, whether front, side, or rear.



- Second floor: use the stairwell immediately if it is safe and passable.
- Second floor blocked stairwell procedure: move into a room, close the door, stay low if there is smoke, signal from the balcony or window, and await rescue instructions.
- Basement level or basement apartment: use the designated basement exit first; if that route is blocked but the stairwell is safe, evacuate via the stairwell to the main floor.

### **Balcony guidance**

The second-floor balcony is not a normal evacuation route. It is an emergency refuge point to increase visibility and improve rescue access if the stairwell cannot be used safely.

### **Assembly and accountability**

- All residents and staff must report to the designated assembly point.
- Attendance must be taken immediately.
- No student may leave the assembly area until released by staff.

### **Fire drills**

Regular fire drills should include standard evacuation, blocked-stairwell reminders, and clear instruction for students on the second floor and in the basement apartment. Each drill should be treated seriously and followed by staff review as needed.

## **Lockdown Protocol**

A lockdown is initiated when there is a serious security threat inside the residence or in the immediate vicinity.

- Go immediately to the nearest secure room.
- Lock and barricade the door if possible.
- Turn off lights and move away from windows and doors.
- Silence phones completely.
- Remain quiet and out of sight.
- Do not open the door for anyone unless directed by identifiable emergency personnel or staff through an established procedure.
- Remain in place until an official all-clear is given.

## **Medical, Wellness, and Safe-School Expectations**

- Injuries, illness, allergic reactions, and mental health concerns must be reported promptly.
- Medication procedures should be reviewed with staff and, where applicable, with the school nurse or designated adult.
- Students are encouraged to seek help early when they are distressed, overwhelmed, or unwell.
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination, and retaliation are not tolerated.
- Students are expected to contribute to a safe and accepting environment and to report concerns affecting themselves or others.

## **Community Living Expectations**

- Shared spaces must be left clean, respectful, and ready for the next person.
- Students must respect privacy, quiet time, and personal boundaries.
- Bedrooms should be kept reasonably tidy and safe.



- Inclusive conduct is expected in all group settings, including meals, meetings, and activities.
- Students are expected to communicate respectfully with staff and peers.

## Discipline and Accountability

MacKay House uses a restorative and progressive approach where possible, while recognizing that some issues are primarily safety matters and may require immediate intervention.

- Responses may include coaching, reflection, restorative conversations, warnings, loss of privileges, restricted leave, parent communication, or more serious disciplinary action.
- Serious concerns include leaving without permission, unauthorized entry, tampering with safety systems, bullying, substance use, dangerous behaviour, or repeated disregard of staff direction.
- Where needed, concerns may be documented and shared with parents/guardians and school leadership.

## MacKay House Bistro Dining Program

The MacKay House dining program is inspired by the structured, choice-based approach used at leading independent schools. Meals are designed to support nutrition, routine, student choice, and community connection.

### Breakfast (self-serve, flexible)

- Fresh fruit such as apples, bananas, berries, or oranges.
- Yogurt and granola.
- Toast, bagels, and spreads.
- Oatmeal station.
- Eggs on selected days.
- Milk, juice, tea, and water.

### Dinner (structured community meal)

Each dinner service should include several standing options so that students have choice while the meal program remains organized.

- Chef's feature: a hot main entrée with protein, starch, and vegetables.
- Vegetarian feature: a complete plant-based or vegetarian meal.
- Pasta option: rotating pasta and sauce selection.
- Big salad option: mixed greens with toppings and a protein add-on.
- Sandwich or light option: wraps, sandwiches, soup, or a similar lighter meal.
- Always available: fruit, bread, and water.

## Detailed Weekly Menu (Elmwood-Inspired)

| Day       | Chef's Feature                               | Vegetarian                | Pasta                         | Salad / Side | Dessert           |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Monday    | Roast chicken, potatoes, seasonal vegetables | Stuffed bell peppers      | Penne with tomato basil sauce | Garden salad | Apple crumble     |
| Tuesday   | Chicken stir-fry with rice                   | Tofu stir-fry             | Garlic butter noodles         | Asian slaw   | Fresh fruit       |
| Wednesday | Beef lasagna                                 | Spinach ricotta lasagna   | Spaghetti marinara            | Caesar salad | Cookies or gelato |
| Thursday  | Beef stew with mashed potatoes               | Lentil and vegetable stew | Creamy mushroom pasta         | Mixed greens | Banana bread      |
| Friday    | Pizza night                                  | Veggie pizza              | Baked pasta                   | Garden salad | Brownies          |



|          |                      |                   |                     |                           |           |
|----------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| Saturday | Burgers or wraps     | Veggie burgers    | Simple tomato pasta | Fries or roasted potatoes | Ice cream |
| Sunday   | Roast beef or turkey | Vegetable pot pie | Baked ziti          | Seasonal vegetables       | Cake      |

Additional weekly snack options may include yogurt parfaits, muffins, granola bars, fruit, and a tea station.

### **Dining expectations**

- Phones are not used during shared meals.
- Students are expected to attend dinner regularly unless excused.
- Table etiquette and respectful conversation are expected.
- Students are responsible for clearing their place setting and helping maintain a welcoming environment.
- No student should be left out socially at mealtimes.

## **Weekly Activities and Student Life Program**

MacKay House programming should balance academic support, wellness, leadership, recreation, and community-building. Students are encouraged to participate regularly in house life.

### **Weekly rhythm**

- Monday – Wellness and Reset: yoga, stretching, journaling, reflection, or a quiet film night.
- Tuesday – Academic Support: supervised study hall, peer tutoring, organization support, or time-management workshops.
- Wednesday – Social Night: board games, trivia, hot chocolate or tea social, and wing bonding activities.
- Thursday – Skills and Leadership: cooking basics, budgeting, laundry and life-skills workshops, student leadership meetings.
- Friday – Fun Night: movie night, karaoke, themed evenings, or cultural celebration events.
- Saturday – Outings and Experiences: shopping trips, skating, bowling, hiking, dining out, or seasonal excursions.
- Sunday – Community and Preparation: family-style dinner, house meeting, room reset, and goal-setting for the week ahead.

### **Monthly and seasonal programming**

- Holiday celebrations such as Halloween, winter celebrations, and spring events.
- Cultural nights that reflect the diversity of the boarding community.
- Birthday recognition and special dinners.
- Community service or charitable initiatives.
- End-of-term and year-end celebrations.

### **Leadership opportunities**

- House Captain or Co-Captains.
- Wing leaders or student ambassadors.
- Wellness or community coordinators.
- Activity and event support roles.

### **Participation expectations**

- Some events may be mandatory because they are central to orientation, safety, or community life.
- Students are expected to participate respectfully even when the activity is outside their usual comfort zone.
- Behaviour expectations during outings and events remain the same as within the residence.



## Final Statement

MacKay House is more than a residence. It is a structured and caring community where students are expected to grow in maturity, confidence, responsibility, and connection. This expanded handbook is intended to bring together the detailed expectations, safety practices, dining structure, and student-life programming that shape a strong boarding experience.