

St. Benedict's College



Library Policy

2015 - 2016

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1. THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY

1.1 Library aims

St. Benedict's College library will:

- * provide up-to-date relevant resources to support the teaching of the curriculum;
- * provide books for recreational reading and will promote a positive attitude towards books by encouraging and motivating pupils to develop their personal tastes and interests through reading;
- * maintain a quiet, purposeful environment in the library so as to encourage independent study and learning.

1.2 Library objectives

The objectives of St. Benedict's College library are:

- * to select and acquire resources across all subject areas;
- * to manage the resources effectively by regular 'weeding out' of books which are irrelevant, out-of-date or in poor condition;
- * to actively promote the use of resources;
- * to support the work of the staff;
- * to help train pupils in information seeking skills;
- * to monitor and evaluate the library performance and developments in library and information service provision;
- * to maintain a comfortable and secure environment conducive to study and learning;
- * to advise on and monitor the use of ICT in the library;
- * to provide the opportunity for all pupils to have equal access to resources for their educational needs;
- * to be a central and vital part of school life;
- * to promote reader development.

1.3 Library functions

The key functions of St. Benedict's College library are seen as being to:

- * encourage subject departments to integrate the library into their teaching - each departmental policy should include the role of the library in their own subject;
- * ensure the organisation of resources for easy access;
- * provide work space for whole classes, small groups and individuals engaged in study or research work;
- * provide for independent study, informal browsing, and consultation with teaching/ library staff;
- * act as an information point for enquiries and facilitate the lending and retrieval of stock;
- * promote and facilitate recreational reading in a conducive atmosphere;
- * act as a focus for information technology and as an access point to other resource providers;
- * develop information skills throughout the college to enable greater exploitation of library resources;
- * support and enhance the pastoral curriculum by developing pupil self-esteem and motivation;
- * promote policies of equality and inclusion by redressing the imbalance caused by differences in social and economic backgrounds;
- * ensure the safety and welfare of the pupils in line with Child Protection Policies;
- * host the Homework Club – Tuesday afternoon.

2. STAFFING

The Post-Primary school library should be professionally staffed on a permanent basis. The library should be made available during and outside class time. Certain essential management tasks, such as stock taking can only be undertaken outside term time.

Effective management, organisation, promotion and exploitation of the resources held in the college library is required in order for the library to fulfil its role in supporting the curriculum.

2.1 The Contribution of the Librarian

The librarian has expertise in matters relating to information handling, learning resources and the learning process. The librarian makes a vitally important contribution to the education process in the following ways:

(a) **Management of services:**

The librarian undertakes all managerial and professional functions associated with the library including assisting with the development, implementation and evaluation of the Library Policy in line with the educational aims and objectives of the college; the Library Action Plan; annual library report to the Board of Governors; managing the library budget; compiling reports and statistics as required; selecting, maintaining and managing all resources within the library.

(b) **Delivery of services:**

The librarian guides and assists teaching staff and pupils to make use of the library and its facilities; manages the delivery of the service by cataloguing all resources and ensuring circulation of resources via the automated library management system 'ECLIPSE'; participates with teaching staff in the planning and development of the Library Induction programme; provides project collections on specific topics when required including advice on evaluating Internet sources; communicates with external agencies ensuring use is made of resources and information provided by support services and outside organisations; maintains regular contact with NEELB Schools Library Service.

(c) **Curriculum overview:**

The librarian's curriculum involvement is not tied to any particular subject area. The librarian has an overview of the whole curriculum - an overview which should extend to a detailed knowledge of the programmes of study followed by all departments. The librarian meets a range of needs and arbitrates between various subject departmental demands.

(d) **Knowledge of resources:**

The librarian has a high level of awareness regarding the full range of resources available to meet the curricular and extra-curricular needs of pupils and staff.

(e) **Management and organisation of resources:**

The professional skills of the librarian enables organisation of resources so as to maximise their use and easy access.

- (f) **Development and promotion of information technology:**
The librarian facilitates the cross-curricular exploitation of electronic resources, encourages the development of pupils' information technology skills and operates the computerised library management system 'ECLIPSE' to ensure efficient loans, requests and retrieval of resources. The I.T. Co-ordinator and librarian should work together on matters such as library computerisation, Internet access and the introduction of software.
- (g) **Literature promotion:**
The librarian's literature knowledge can be used to support teaching in all curriculum areas and to foster reading for pleasure.
- (h) **Collaboration with teaching staff:**
The librarian works in partnership with teaching staff on a formal and informal basis. The work with subject departments and those who have a senior role in designing and maintaining the curriculum ensures that all pupils have access to quality resources for the curriculum and beyond.
- (i) **Professional development:**
The librarian should have access to training opportunities to develop skills and knowledge, in order to be able to respond effectively to the changing needs of the school and to the developing role of the library.
- (j) **Pastoral role:**
Since pupils often see the library as a 'safe', non-threatening, impartial environment, the librarian has an additional pastoral role.

2.2 Liaison with Departments and Staff

Each teacher in the college can make significant contributions to the integration of the college library into their own subject areas and to the daily life of the college. The library should be the place for staff when they need resources to enhance classroom teaching.

Supporting the curriculum

St. Benedict's College library supports all staff, both teaching and non-teaching in their work.

Teachers should

- * include reference to the use of the library and its resources in departmental handbooks. This could be developed by indicating specific resources which are known to exist in the library and by regularly monitoring the type and availability of stock.
- * guide and support pupils in their approach to study and suggest how the library might assist in this.

Co-operative teaching

- * The librarian and teacher may plan and prepare approaches to lessons.
- * Library Induction - a library orientation programme exists for new pupils.
- * Promotion of the use of fiction.
- * Encouraging pupils to return overdue books
- * Encouraging pupils to treat the library and resources with care and respect.

Responsibilities of teaching staff towards the library

In order for the library to function more effectively teaching staff should inform the librarian in advance:

- * when they wish to book a class in for teaching or research work within the library.
- * when stock items are likely to be in high demand for a short period of time.
- * of resources required for a particular research topic and class involved, to enable Librarian to choose the appropriate material.
- * of which items they would like to see added to or removed from library stock
- * proper care of library and stock.

2.3 Role of Pupil Librarians

The Librarian will be assisted in her duties by a number of pupil librarians, selected by and monitored by the Librarian and the teacher-in-charge of the library. Pupil involvement in the college library is important in encouraging a sense of respect and care for the library and in developing their information skills.

3. ENVIRONMENT

The library should be one of the most welcoming, stimulating and attractive areas within the college, using space and furnishings to enhance book displays and learning resources. An environment of this nature plays an important role in helping pupils and staff to feel welcome and to help pupils to become independent users of the various resources available.

3.1 Siting

St. Benedict's College library is in a central area, close to the front hall in the college building. This provides access for all pupils and staff and facilitates the delivery and removal of stock, by Schools Library Service. There is only one entrance/ exit. Access to and from the library is provided by a set of stairs and therefore the library cannot facilitate access for wheelchair users or a school book fair.

3.2 Space

The amount of space required for the library should be based on the need to provide accommodation for 10% of the college's pupils at any one time.

A school of 600 pupils should have the following library area:

Main library area	130m ² (100m ² + 1m ² per 20 pupils)
Audio-visual room	47m ² (35m ² + 1m ² per 50 pupils)
Store/ workroom	14m ²
Group activity room	28m ²
Total	219m ²

(excluding reprographics and ICT provision)

St. Benedict's College Library Suite

Main library area	75.25m ²
Audio-visual room	This room does not exist in the College library
Store/ workroom	10.5m ²
Group activity room	This room does not exist in the College library

The library suite should be a flexible space devoted to:

- * the storage of easily accessible ICT materials;
- * facilities for quiet study, reading, listening, and the use of computers by individuals and small groups;
- * browsing;
- * leisure/ recreational reading;
- * displays (display facilities are used to promote the library and its resources and for pupils to display their own work; library shelving should incorporate display shelves; display boards should be fitted to unused wall spaces);
- * I.T. facilities such as computers (individual computers throughout the library or a suite of machines in a purpose built benched area). There should be sufficient power and data cabling to service the existing provision and for expansion in the near future.
- * printing services;
- * office/ work room space should be provided for the Librarian. At present there is no office/ work room space in St. Benedict's College library.

3.3 Atmosphere

St. Benedict's College library is well lit, airy and adequately heated in accordance with current building and Health and Safety regulations.

3.4 Layout and Design

The effectiveness of St. Benedict's College library is further enhanced by attention to the layout and design.

- * the issue desk is situated near to the main entrance for stock security purposes;
- * the layout is open and informal allowing for supervision from the librarian's desk;
- * an area has been created for fiction books;
- * the shelving layout ensures a logical sequencing of stock to enable pupils to locate resources efficiently;
- * there is ample provision of cabling and power points.

3.5 Furniture and equipment

If the college library is to function effectively, it requires a good range of furniture and equipment:-

- * adjustable shelving;
- * paperback stands;
- * storage for non book materials in a range of formats;
- * comfortable seating and appropriate tables;
- * an issue counter;
- * computers;
- * Internet access;
- * printer;
- * computerised library stock control and circulation system;
- * pupils with special needs should be considered when equipping the library.

Shelving

Shelving is an important item of furniture and should be appropriate for all users. The following factors are of importance:

- * shelving should be secure, sturdy, hard wearing and fully adjustable;
- * metal shelving is the best option;
- * book supports are essential and the shelving should accommodate bay and shelf guiding;
- * standard display shelves should be available for use throughout the library.

The following are recommended measurements for shelving including the maximum overall height:

- (a) wall shelves must not exceed a maximum of 1800mm
- (b) island bay units must not exceed a maximum of 1500mm
- (c) height of bottom shelf from the floor should be 150mm
- (d) length of individual shelves should be 900mm
- (e) normal shelving depth should be 200 – 250mm.

Other types of appropriate shelving include paperback display and mobile units on castors.

Seating Areas

A height of 650 – 750mm is appropriate for secondary school pupils.

There should be a range of seating to suit the various purposes for which the library is used, including adjustable swivel chairs for computer workstations. In St. Benedict's College library there is formal seating (9 tables and 27 chairs) for 27 users. There are fifteen computer spaces.

Counter and Issue Facilities

The counter area is the focal point of a school library where users are welcomed, enquiries are answered and resources are issued and returned. It should be functional and aesthetically pleasing. The counter should allow for storage underneath, with ample legroom for staff seated there. Special consideration must be given to the provision of ICT cabling and power points.

4. LEARNING RESOURCES

All resources in the school should be centralised in the college library rather than in subject department and classroom libraries.

A stock selection and withdrawal policy should exist.

The college library stock should comprise the following:

4.1 Books

The book stock should support the known and perceived needs of both staff and pupils.

In St. Benedict's College library, information books are extremely important and reading for pleasure is reflected in a range of good quality fiction and poetry titles. Book stock includes: fiction, non-fiction, reference and poetry.

4.2 Audio-visual material

Library stock should contain material in a wide variety of formats to provide access for staff and pupils to a full range of information sources. Ear phones are available to pupils on request.

4.3 Information technology

The library should be the information centre of the school and the focus for I.T. applications. Information technology should be continually assessed as part of the School Development Plan. St. Benedict's College library has Internet access and PC workstations are used by pupils for accessing external information sources and for encouraging the development in pupils of a broad range of information-handling skills and search strategies. The provision of I.T. equipment has implications for Health and Safety and security. Suitable precautions against theft or vandalism should be taken.

4.4 Pupil Generated Resources

Pupils can assist in compiling learning resources for the library. St. Benedict's College pupils compile wall displays etc.

4.5 Size of stock

St. Benedict's College library has books of good quality which are up-to-date, relevant and covering the age range, ability, gender and cultural background of all pupils including those with special education needs. The resource materials support the objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, of pupils' leisure needs and of the aims of the College.

Each pupil is required to have 13 resource items which are relevant to the current curriculum; ten of the items must be books. However, in schools with a small pupil roll, or those catering for post-16 education, this figure will need to be increased to ensure an adequate depth and breadth of provision.

A stock count takes place once a year during the summer term.

4.6 Stock control system

A computerised library management system 'ECLIPSE' exists in order to ensure effective stock control and is a valuable asset in the college library.

An efficient computerised library management system enhances the effectiveness of the library by:

- * ensuring fast, accurate searching
- * increasing use of stock through keyword searching
- * operating a reservation system
- * speeding up procedures
- * giving greater precision to stock control
- * providing management information to aid decision making and planning.

Security of Resources

The school is responsible for the resources within the library.

The installation of an electronic security system in school libraries is an important method of safeguarding library stock and helping to prevent loss of resources. In St. Benedict's College library a security system is unavailable, and so the library is staffed and supervised at all times.

4.7 Organisation of library resources

In St. Benedict's College library resources are organised to optimise use across all subject areas and to allow staff and pupils to find information quickly. There is an up-to-date catalogue and non-fiction items are arranged according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System. This system ensures that:

- * books on similar subjects are kept in close proximity in the library
- * library resources from external sources are integrated into the college library stock
- * pupils are familiar and able to confidently use a system that is used in most public libraries in Northern Ireland.

For the Dewey Decimal Classification System to work well it is supported by:

- * guidance on layout and location of stock including posters and shelf guides
- * a subject index
- * spine labels bearing the classification number.

Fiction stock is arranged in alphabetical order by author surname.

Loan Procedures

A simple and efficient loan procedure exists in order to ensure effective stock control. This is undertaken with a computerised issue system 'ECLIPSE'.

5. FUNDING

Funding is important in ensuring that library resource material is always up-to-date and relevant to the needs of the curriculum and for maintenance of the library. The school's total budget must include an adequate amount for the library every year. The library is a whole school resource serving all staff and pupils.

There should be a library book-fund, adequate funding for new initiatives, separate funding for furniture, equipment and stationery, and a realistic development programme.

5.1 Learning Resources

To fulfil its role in supporting the curriculum, both adequate and regular funding is required to maintain library resources. It is recommended that a minimum of 10% of the library's resources be replaced annually, otherwise the stock will deteriorate in content and condition, and will no longer be relevant to the needs of the staff and pupils.

If the total number of resource items relevant to the current curriculum does not reach the recommended minimum size of 13 items per pupil, a planned development programme is necessary. This has implications in terms of funding. Many schools use their own funds in addition to what is available through the Schools Library Service, to develop their libraries and bring existing stock closer to the recommended levels.

5.2 Stationery and consumables

Funding should be provided for:

- * the purchase of library stationery
- * display materials including posters

At present the college library receives a restricted amount of funding in this area.

5.3 Furniture and equipment

The library should be included in the general school maintenance programme and there should be a budget for the physical environment of the library, including furniture and equipment. The physical appearance of St. Benedict's College library is bright, attractive and welcoming. Furniture and equipment are looked at regularly and replaced as appropriate. Worn carpets and window blinds, defaced tables and chairs, and damaged shelving portray a negative image of the library to staff, pupils and visitors. Health and safety policies apply to St. Benedict's College library and safety is of paramount importance with regard to shelving and I.T. applications.

5.4 Audio-visual material

Funding should be made available for DVDs; computer software etc.

6. READING

Literacy is the key to learning and reading is fundamental in developing literacy. Critical thinking, and the skills of accessing, handling and evaluating information, depends upon the ability to read and understand. Everyone in the College should value and enjoy reading. A properly resourced and staffed library will play a crucial role in promoting a positive attitude towards books and in fostering a genuine love of reading for pleasure.

This is achieved in St. Benedict's College library in a number of ways:

- * through the provision of an up-to-date, attractive and wide-ranging collection of literature. This should include novels in different genres by past and contemporary writers, poetry and non-fiction relevant to the academic and leisure interests of pupils;
- * through the creation of book displays which are regularly changed, and at times which are comprised of titles and book jackets/ posters by particular authors or on a selected theme;
- * through the provision of book reviews compiled by pupils;
- * through the organisation of book events on either a large or small scale, such as commercial book clubs (Scholastic Teen Book Club) and book fair (annually) . These can be particularly effective in focusing the whole school's attention on both the range of material available and the enjoyment that reading can give;
- * through celebrating special events such as National Poetry Day in October and World Book Day in March each year.

7. PROMOTION AND USE

The promotion of the library's learning resources is fundamental to encouraging greater use of the library and to achieving higher educational standards throughout the school.

Promotion and greater use of St. Benedict's College library is achieved in the following ways:

- * The staff and pupils in the college are made aware of the library and all its resources.
- * For pupils, clear guidance, displays and promotional material (posters) are useful aids to better awareness of the college library.
- * Other useful promotional aids include some of the following: book club; book fair.
- * A subject index should be made available and clearly displayed.
- * NEELB Schools Library Service is used to the full and good liaison fostered with external agencies.

7.1 Access

St. Benedict's College library:

- * is open during class time for research and study.
- * is open for study or leisure use before/after school (Homework club) and at break and lunch time.
- * is supervised at all times.
- * restricts access to no more than twenty pupils at a time outside class time.
- * has a system of rules and sanctions including procedures to deal with overdue resources and behaviour of pupils using the library.
- * applies the College policy on health and safety regulations to the library.
- * is an area in which pupils may read silently or carry out work. A reasonably quiet environment is expected whereby library users may use the facility and materials without disturbance.
- * strictly forbids eating and drinking. Bottled water may only be drunk outside the library door.
- * does not allow handheld games consoles and mobile phones to be used in the library.
- * does not permit the use of bad language.
- * stipulates that any pupil who breaks library rules will be asked to leave immediately and will not be permitted to make use of the facility again.

7.2 Services

In St. Benedict's College library the following services are available to ensure greater use by staff and pupils:

- * Reference/ enquiry facility
- * Lending facility and borrowing procedures
e.g. pupils may borrow one fiction or non-fiction book for two weeks, but this may be extended;
- * a study facility
- * displays
- * borrowing material from NEELB Schools Library Service
- * advising staff on suitability of materials appropriate to their learning needs
- * guidance for pupils in investigative work
- * provision of computer workstations.

8. INFORMATION SKILLS

8.1 Information Skills

Information skills support the Northern Ireland Curriculum and need to be developed in a curriculum context. Pupils need to be able to research, evaluate and present information effectively otherwise they will not develop into independent learners.

Information skills need to be developed to enable all resources in the library and throughout the school to be fully exploited. Pupils should be encouraged to use the PLUS Model to do their research:

- 1. Purpose**
 - Identify exactly what the topic is about
 - Explore existing knowledge
 - Use thinking skills in brainstorming or concept mapping
 - Form questions
 - Identify keywords

- 2. Location**
 - Find relevant information in a range of different sources
 - Use selection skills in assessing the relevance of an information resource
 - Use IT skills when using electronic sources such as the Internet

- 3. Use**
 - Reading skills - skim and scan print and electronic resources for information
 - Select and evaluate quality and relevance of information
 - Take notes
 - Present information and write a bibliography

- 4. Self-Evaluation**
 - Reflect on what has been learnt and come to a conclusion based on the information found
 - Identify areas of improvement in planning and finding information

9. MONITORING and EVALUATION

In order to effectively manage a library, the monitoring and evaluating of performance is vital. Consistent information which can be easily measured will provide an accurate profile of the library facilities and services. When an accurate and clear profile of the library is compiled, change and enhancement can then take place.

In St. Benedict's College library monitoring and evaluation takes place in a number of ways:

- * liaison with the teacher-in-charge of the Library;
- * annual review of the college library with teacher-in-charge of the library;
- * an annual report is submitted to the Principal and Board of Governors;
- * a monthly library report is compiled.