**Book Nook Primary School**

**Library Collection Policy**



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**School Mission**

*Quality education in a quality environment*

**Library Mission**

*The library strives to provide a caring, vibrant environment, which meets the information needs of the school community and encourages information literacy, lifelong learners and the love of reading*

**Library Vision**

*The library is a source of quality, relevant, accurate and current information and recreation resources that offers equitable access to its learning community*

**Policy Written**: *27th May, 2013*

**Policy Review**: *27th May, 2016*

***Contents***

1) Context

2) Purpose and Goals

3) Types of Resources

4) Access to Resources

5) Funding

6) Selection

7) Acquisition

8) Copyright

9) Weeding

10) Evaluation

11) Challenges

**1. Context**

Book Nook Junior School (BNJS) is a small independent school situated in a semi-rural suburb of Western Sydney. There is a wide range of academic abilities that is typical of any school with regular mainstream classes. Only 5% of students have an English as a Second Language background.

**2. Purpose and Goals**

The **role** of BNJS Library is to successfully support the teaching and learning needs of the staff and students in relation to the implementation of the [Australian Curriculum](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au) and [K-6 Syllabuses](http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au) The **purpose** of the library collection is to provide a variety of quality educational materials in a range of formats to support this teaching and learning process and provide access to information that is comprehensive, relevant and current. It also strives to meet the cultural, recreational and professional needs of the wider school community.

**Nature of the collection**

The overall collection needs some attention. There is a reasonable selection of Fiction, with additional numbers of PRC books planned for Year 5 and 6. Multiple copies and/or a wider variety of Easy Fiction and Graphic Novels are necessary to cater for the high student demand. CD/Book sets are becoming increasingly popular and needs to be sustained. Most resource formats are print, with future plans to develop the print and digital nonfiction sections for both teachers and students.

The Library Website is in initial stages of development. In order to increase accessibility for future students undertaking the same units of work currently being taught, there is a move to centralise class intranet resources onto a Library Website. Also available will be guides on researching, referencing, access to the online library catalogue and other pertinent information.

The **goals** of BNJS Library are drawn from documents created by the Australian School Library Association (ASLA) and the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), including the [School Library Bill of Rights](http://www.asla.org.au/policy/bill-of-rights.aspx) the statement on [School Library Resource Provision](http://www.asla.org.au/policy/school-library-resource-provision.aspx) and the statement on [Library and Information Services in Schools](http://www.asla.org.au/policy/school-library-information-services.aspx). The overarching goal is to provide the learning community with a collection that meets its information needs, cultivates information literacy skills, promotes lifelong learners and encourages the love of reading.

Specific goals are:

* To increase the number of PRC texts available and encourage students to complete this initiative;
* To increase Teacher Resources and nonfiction materials in both print and digital formats;
* To create a Library Website that will enhance access to information.

(ACARA, 2013, ALIA/ASLA, 2009a, ALIA/ASLA, 2009b, ASLA, 2000, Debowski, 2001a, p.127, New South Government, 2012)

**3. Types of Resources**

The library collection has resources in the following formats, which attempt to cater for different teaching and learning information needs. These include:

* Print – Fiction, Non-Fiction, Reference, Graphic Novels, Big Books, Teacher Reference
* Graphic Resources – Charts, Posters, Pictures, Maps, Photographs
* Digital Collection – CDs and DVDs are replacing videos and audiocassettes as these systems are no longer supported in the classroom
* Online resources – Library Website in initial stage of development
* Teaching Kits - to support specific areas based on syllabus requirements
* Realia – flags, Aboriginal artifacts etc.
* Games – Chess club and other educationally strategic games organised at lunch in the library

**4. Access to Resources**

Students have access to and are able to borrow from the library collection during weekly library lessons and school opening hours. Students are able to externally research available resources via the [OLIVER Softlink System](http://www2.softlinkint.com/?au/oliver_overview) through the school’s intranet site. With the creation of the Library Website students will have access to specific pathfinders applicable to their inquiry topic and available to them at any time.

(Softlink, 2013)

**5. Funding**

Funding is determined by needs-based budgeting centred on the school curriculum, learner and collection needs that have been assessed through the continuing process of collection evaluation. At the beginning of each year, the library is allocated a budget approved by the principal and School Board. This budget is derived from a written report by the TL, which accounts for how the budget had been spent the previous year and a submission of funding for priority areas and additional resources for the current year. It will include proposals for funding in the areas of collection maintenance (about 10% to be replaced annually), collection development, recurrent resource costs and capital expenditure.

The TL will be responsible for organising an annual Book Fair and coordinating Book Club with parent assistance. Proceeds will be used to supplement the library budget and resources.

(ALIA/ASLA, 2009c, Debowski, 2001b, p.304)

**6. Selection**

In collaboration with teaching staff, the TL is responsible for coordinating the selection of library resources, using a systematic process that is based on the school’s priorities, the library budget and the following general and specific selection criteria. It is not necessary for a resource to meet all the criteria. Requests made by staff or parents, donations and gifts of resources, will undergo the same selection criteria as purchased resources. Suitable donations and gift items will be fitted with a bookplate acknowledging the benefactor’s name.

**General Selection Criteria**

* **Relevance**

- supports school’s curriculum

- purposeful, meaningful and relevant to learner

* **Authority**

- qualified and/or experienced

- recognised publisher

* **Accuracy**

- Current, reliable and accurate information

- Content is clear/understandable

* **Structure and Layout**

- well-designed layout of text, images and colour

- sturdy/high quality materials

- appropriate format

* **Scope**

- Compatibility with existing resources

- Supplementary material requirements

- Instructions/support materials are user-friendly

- Regularly maintained

* **Availability**
* **Appropriateness**

- content/language academically and socially suitable

- unbiased/fair presentation of information

- Consideration of students with particular needs (e.g. physical and intellectual)

* **Price**
* value for money
* Ongoing cost

**Specific Selection Criteria**

In addition to the general selection criteria, the following specific criteria are to be considered:

* **Nonfiction Print Resources**
* Correct/up-to-date
* Quality illustrations
* Functional organisation of information, eg. index, contents, glossary
* **Fiction Print Resources**
* Appropriate language
* Suitable plot, theme and characterisation
* Easy-to-read text/appealing illustrations
* Literary quality
* **Digital Resources**
* Age appropriate content (see [Office of Film and Literature Classification](http://www.classification.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx) for rating)
* Ease of navigation/user-friendly
* Technical quality – sound/vision/function
* Appropriate support
* Compatible
* Multi-users (if appropriate)
* Suitable licensing agreements
* Security
* Websites comply with BNJS [Website Evaluation Form](http://samanthaellis4.wordpress.com/2013/05/24/website-evaluation-form/)
* **Graphic**
* Visuals/text are clear
* Durability
* Games appropriate
* Interesting
* Historical

**Selection Aids**

The following selection aids may be used to assist in selection:

* Professional reviews, eg. [SCAN](http://scan.nsw.edu.au) and [Magpies](http://www.magpies.net.au)
* Guides to children’s literature, eg. [State Library of Western Australia](http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/find/guides/childrens_literature)
* [PRC](https://products.schools.nsw.edu.au/prc/booklist/home.html) booklist
* Children’s literacy awards, eg. [Children’s Book Council of Australia](http://cbca.org.au/awards.htm) (CBCA)
* Suggestions from students, teachers or the school community
* Publishers, catalogues, booksellers (print or online)
* Standing orders

(Australian Government, 2011-2012, CBCA, 2007-2012, Ellis, 2013a, Kennedy, 2006, p.49, NSWDEC, n.d., NSWDEC, 2013, NSWDET, 1996, p.26, Wattawa Heights Public School, n.d., Western Australia Department of Education, 2013, p.258)

**7. Acquisition**

All resources acquired will adhere to the above selection criteria and if possible, materials will be examined before purchasing. The TL will use the appropriate Order Form. The Finance Department will place the order, a copy of which will go to the Head of Primary for approval. The TL will maintain records of all purchases. The TL is responsible for checking the status and condition of the item once it has arrived and following the acquisition procedures before it is borrowed.

Approved print and online suppliers comprising bookshops, standing orders, publishers and book warehouses that can demonstrate the following will be used to purchase resources:

* Customer service
* Accuracy and reliability in filling orders and accountancy
* Willingness to discount/negotiate licences
* Speed of service
* Range of supply
* Promptness in rectifying mistakes
* Return policy for unwanted resources

(Kennedy, 2006, p.61-85, NSWDET, 1996, p. 29)

**8. Copyright**

BNJS Library will adhere to the Australian Copyright legislation and licensing agreements with regards to the use of all resource formats. Under the ALIA [Statement on Professional Conduct](http://alianet.alia.org.au/policies/professional.conduct.html), teachers and students will respect the intellectual property of others. Copyright regulations in Australian schools can be found at [Smartcopying](http://www.smartcopying.edu.au/scw/go/pid/1).

(ALIA, 2007a, National Copyright Unit, n.d.)

**9. Weeding**

The TL is responsible for weeding resources every two years, which may involve the assistance of trained parents or volunteers. This is a critical process in ensuring that the collection is current, relevant and reliable. Weeding of items will include all print and digital resources. One exception is local historical items that may be retained indefinitely despite its condition if a replacement cannot be procured.

**Criteria for weeding**

* **Physical condition**
* Torn/damaged beyond repair
* age
* **Content and form**
* Inaccurate/biased
* Dated/obsolete
* superseded editions
* stereotyping
* irrelevant to school curriculum/user needs and interests
* inappropriate to reading and/or social level of students
* duplicate copies no longer required
* internet sites no longer exist
* **Use patterns**
* not borrowed in over two years

**Damaged**

Damaged resources that meet the selection criteria will be repaired unless cost prohibitive.

**Replacement**

Materials in a poor state of repair, but still required will be replaced if the item meets one of the following factors:

* selection criteria
* duplicate copies required
* historical value
* availability of resource in a newer format

**Disposal of Weeded Material**

The TL will use a variety of methods to dispose of weeded items depending on the resource and its condition. Websites with links that no longer work or fit other weeding criteria will be deleted. The removal of digital resources will concur with contract and licensing agreements. Tangible materials will be:

* recycled
* discarded
* offered to staff
* donated to charity organisations
* sold

(Dillon, 2001, Larson, 2008, Scone Library, n.d., Wattawa Heights Public School, n.d.)

**10. Evaluation**

Regular and ongoing evaluation of the library collection is necessary to maintain its effectiveness in meeting the teaching and learning needs of its users. This includes assessment of the quantity, quality and currency of the collection. The TL will be responsible for evaluation and reporting the status of the library collection to the principal and School Board at the end of each year. This report will include assessment of the collection and take into account the educational priorities set by the School Annual Report, the Library Budget and the selection criteria. Evaluation and assessment methods of the collection may include:

* An annual stocktake
* Collection mapping of priority areas
* Feedback from the learning community identifying areas of need
* Automated reports detailing circulation, number of resources and preferred formats
* Weeding analysis
* Shelving – noting age, physical condition and appearance of resources

Evaluation of specific library goals include:

* Analysis of books in collection to PRC booklist and borrowing patterns
* [Teacher satisfaction survey](http://samanthaellis4.wordpress.com/2013/05/24/end-of-unit-teacher-survey/) of Library Website and Teacher Resources at completion of a unit
* Informal student survey of Library Website

(ALIA/ASLA, 2001, ALIA Schools and Victorian Catholic Teacher Librarians, 2007, p.28, Arizona State Library, 2008, Bishop, 2007, Doll & Barron, 2002, Ellis, 2013b)

**11. Challenges**

The BNJS Library has an obligation under the [School Library Bill of Rights](http://www.asla.org.au/policy/bill-of-rights.aspx) and the statement on [Free Access to Information](http://alianet.alia.org.au/policies/free.access.html) to provide resources that expose users to varying opinions and information which encourage student’s critical thinking and help them make informed decisions. It is acknowledged that the learning community has the right to object to the inclusion of material that may be deemed controversial, inappropriate or offensive. The right of the challenger will be treated with respect and courtesy.

1. On receipt of a complaint, initial contact will be made by the teacher librarian to the challenger to resolve any misunderstanding.
2. If the complaint is to continue, a copy of the Book Nook Library Policy with the selection criteria and challenges section highlighted, will be forwarded to the challenger who is required to fill in a **Request for consideration of school and library resources** form (Appendix 1). This will be handed in to the teacher librarian and the principal will be notified.
3. On receipt of this form, the challenger is informed of the fortnight response to their complaint.
4. A panel consisting of the principal (or nominee), teacher librarian and one other staff member will review the item. The item in question will remain in the collection during the review process, however the challenger may elect for the item not to be loaned to their child/ren. Once a decision has been made, the disputed item may remain in the collection, be withdrawn to Teacher Reference or removed permanently from the collection.
5. The principal (if principal’s nominee on panel) and complainant will be notified in writing of the decision and a copy will be kept on file in the library until the item is weeded using the library’s weeding criterion.
6. If there is an objection to the decision by the complainant the principal will be the final arbitrator.
7. If the complainant wishes to take this matter further, it will be referred to the School Board and then the Association of Independent Schools.

(ALIA, 2007b, ALIA Schools, 2007, ASLA, 2000, Crotty, 2013, Scone Public School, n.d.)

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***Part C – Reflection***

**Introduction**

Three key areas of learning that have occurred as a result of completing this assessment are:

1. The value of writing and having a current Library Collection Policy;
2. The importance of continual and regular evaluation of the library collection and
3. The knowledge of the complex issues surrounding copyright.

**Value of a Policy**

With the introduction of the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2013), it is imperative that libraries are ready to support this new syllabus, particularly as the emphasis is on developing information literacy skills (Mitchell, 2011). Changes in curriculum leads to changes in resource formats and materials. The library collection needs to ensure that, “every student has equitable access to a variety of quality, relevant, accurate and current information resources”, which directly relates to the teaching and learning outcomes of the school’s curriculum (ALIA/ASLA, 2001, p.25). The most effective approach to resourcing a balanced collection is to implement a current Collection Policy that has been written in collaboration with staff and developed within the framework of the broader school policy (ASLA/ALIA, 2001). The policy creates the foundation for a systematic approach to selection, acquisition organisation, maintenance and funding of a quality educational collection.

Having written many policies in the past and witnessed them being placed on a shelf to gather dust, it has been refreshing to write one that is a practical document. Examining the essential components of a library – purposes, goals, nature of the collection, types of resources, funding, selection criteria, acquisition, weeding criteria and evaluation has packaged together the cyclical nature of working in a library. It has also highlighted the significance of knowing the context of the learning community and creating a policy based on the individual needs of the school and not from a generic library policy (Hughes-Hassall & Mancall, 2005). As I alone have composed this hypothetical policy, it will be necessary to rewrite sections (and add a procedural element) in collaboration with staff members, when it becomes a working document in a school setting (Department of Children’s Services, 2004).

**Evaluation**

Research indicates that the quality of a library collection has a positive impact on student learning where there is a high use of library resources (ALIA Schools and Victorian Catholic Teacher Librarians, 2007). Evaluation is critical in examining the role and nature of the school’s library collection by assessing the quality and quantity of information resources in contributing to student learning. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the library collection is also valuable to formulating future plans and budgets (Hughes-Hassell & Mancall, 2005). The capacity to provide statistical data, which demonstrates a need in the collection, is more likely to be approved by the principal and School Board (Bishop, 2007). Equally important is the facility to provide data in a concise, easy-to-read format, (such as a spreadsheet) to validate how the judicious spending of funds supported the teaching and learning needs of the school (Hart, 2003).

Part of evaluating the collection is an annual stocktake and regular weeding (Hill, 2012; Lowe 2001). Outdated resources will clutter shelves and websites that no longer work frustrate. It is important to remember both print and digital resources. As Larson (2012), states, “it is better to lack enough information on a topic than to have erroneous information” (p.34). Prior to this course, it was exasperating as a teacher to have the library closed at the end of each year to undergo stocktake. However, the value of this process, including its time-consuming nature, is now clearly understood.

**Copyright**

Copyright legislation is an enormous issue that is poorly understood in most schools. The most commonly held misconception in the school context is that if there is no copyright symbol and it is available in the public domain (such as on the Internet), the work is copyright free. However, in Australia, no formal registration is required as there is an assumption by the copyright legislation that all work is copyrighted (National Copyright Unit, n.d.). Learning about statutory and voluntary licence schemes, creative commons and how to attribute work will be of immense value in educating teachers and students in the future.

**Conclusion**

Reading extensively on and having to write a library collection policy, has been invaluable in teaching about the cyclical role and nature of the library collection in meeting the informational, educational and recreational needs of a learning community. Being able to start in a school with a working document and knowing the theory behind evaluating a collection will be extremely beneficial in my future role as teacher librarian.

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**Appendix 1**



**Book Nook Primary School**

4444 Technology Street

LIBRARY NSW 2222

**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL AND LIBRARY RESOURCES**

Request initiated by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Publisher (if known) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Complainant represents:

☐ Self

☐ Organisation (please name) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Other group (please identify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please answer Questions 1–10 in spaces provided or on a separate page if necessary.

1. What do you object to in this material? (Please be specific and cite sections/pages.)
2. For what age group would you recommend this material?
3. Is there anything worthwhile about this material?
4. Did you examine the whole item?  If not, what parts?
5. Are you aware of the educational/literary assessments of this material?
6. Are you aware of the school’s commitments to values and equity in education?
7. What do you believe is the intention/theme of this material and its place in the curriculum?
8. What would you like your school to do about this material? (Please indicate.)

☐ Reconsider its suitability for inclusion in the school library.

☐ Reconsider its suitability for inclusion in the teaching program.

☐ Do not give it to my child.

☐ Use it with teacher support only.

☐ Withdraw it from all students as well as from my child.

1. If you wish it to be withdrawn, what item would you suggest replaces it in the collection?

Signature of complainant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………Office use only

Follow up action:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Principal or delegate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from New South Wales Department of School Education. (1996). *Handbook for school libraries.* (2nd ed.). Ryde: Curriculum Directorate.