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RETNS LIBRARY AND COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Introduction:

This Library & Collection Development Policy outlines the mission, aims and objectives of RETNS Library together with guidelines for selection and deselection (weeding) of materials, including donations.

RETNS Library can be found in Room 12 and is currently supported by a team of volunteer librarian and parent/guardian volunteers. It is also supported by a Library Committee consisting of a volunteer librarian, the Principal, staff volunteers and other volunteers as appropriate. Junior Library Assistants will be involved over time.

Mission statement

The RETNS Library shares the ethos and values of the whole school. Just as teaching in the school provides an opportunity to inspire and empower, the RETNS Library will inspire a love of reading and empower children to learn independently.

Aims

The RETNS Library shares the aims of the whole school “to enhance learning as a transformative experience; to promote and develop critical thinking skills; to encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning; to cultivate learning partnerships with children while nurturing and inspiring their courage to grow; to foster curiosity; to provide opportunities for developing relationships and clarifying values; to uplift children’s spirit and ignite their action; to open hearts and minds; to encourage children to see through a different lens academically, emotionally, physically and socially.”

Objectives

The RETNS Library and Collections will:

1. Inspire reading for fun
2. Empower reading for skill
3. Support teaching and learning
4. Advance digital literacy

2. Scope:

This policy applies to the Board of Management, staff, children and volunteer parents/guardians of RETNS. The policy provides clear guidelines for the development of our library collection.

3. Policy statement:

Library resources

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) recommends 10-13 quality library books for every child. This excludes textbooks, structured readers and class sets. RETNS Library endorses this recommendation and aims to reach this benchmark of approximately 2,600 books.

Books wear out or become outdated and the average life expectancy of a book is 10 years so RETNS Library will work towards 10% replacement per year, but not necessarily like for like.

Every classroom also has a class library, with a range of books appropriate to the class level, which children can access and which children have a role in maintaining and developing.

The libraries in Junior classrooms have a range of picture/story books and are used by teachers to enrich and develop language and reading skills.

Tá sé mar aidhm againn go mbeadh cnúsach maith de leabhair Gaeilge i ngach seomra ranga agus sa leabharlann, ionas go dtuigfeadh na páistí gur féidir sult agus taitneamh a bhaint as leitheoireacht trí Ghaeilge.

RETNS will invest in a selection of books to reflect the home languages of our children. Some of these, as well as a selection of Irish books, will be dual-language books.

The school has a Learn Together library where teachers borrow books based on aspects of the Learn Together Curriculum.

Books in each of the class libraries and Learn Together library will over time be listed in the appropriate section of the main Library catalogue, so that a central catalogue of all books in the school is maintained.

Borrowing

Each class is designated a time during the school week when they can visit the library and borrow books. Junior classes (Junior Infants to Second Class) are supported by a parent volunteer when available.

Junior Library Assistants

The RETNS Library will engage and train a number of Junior Library Assistants from senior classes to:

- Help in the library at set times agreed with the librarian
- Shelve fiction books in A-Z order
- Shelve non-fiction books in subject order
- Keep the stock tidy and in the correct order
- Help with library displays
- Help issue and return resources
- Help other children find what they are looking for
- Any other jobs which help the librarian

Digital Literacy

Children today are generally considered to be digital natives; able to use technology effectively and easily. However, it is important to teach children to become digital citizens. A digital citizen acts appropriately and ethically in an online environment. They must be able to source material ethically and interact with the wider world in a responsible manner. This is highlighted in our Acceptable Use Policy and is also part of our Digital Learning Plan.

To be digitally literate children need to be able to navigate, evaluate and create using all forms of digital technologies, for example, tablets, Chromebooks and other computers.

Digital literacy is always evolving as newer technologies become mainstream, therefore it includes, but is not limited to:

- practical technical skills including finding information
- collaboration skills
- social and cultural skills
- critical thinking
- Online Safety Skills
- Communication and Netiquette

Further information can be found on https://www.webwise.ie/teachers/digital_literacy/

Collection Development Policy

The diversity of the school community must be reflected in the Library's collections "so that each member of the community feels equally valued, respected, accepted and supported." Books are selected by the Library Committee by reviewing existing gaps in the collection and examining reading guides from organisations such as Children's Books Ireland and other relevant resources.

Assessment criteria

- Library books should meet one or more of RETNS Library objectives; reading for fun, reading for skill or support for the school curriculum and teaching and learning.

- Library books should be up to date. Many non-fiction books go out of date quickly. Popular books and subjects should be replaced, where possible and when necessary, with newer editions.
- Library books should be representative of our school community, inclusive of all belief systems, ages, genders, sexualities, races, ethnicities and abilities.
Where possible library books should support at least one of RETNS' values, which include kindness, cooperation, respect, honesty, justice & equality, happiness & well-being, love & nurture, peace, responsibility, empathy & understanding and community.
- Library books should be of a suitable reading level and age appropriate for our school community.

Questions to consider:

- Does this book foster a love of reading?
- Does this book reflect our diverse school community?
- Does this book reflect an equitable global view?
- Does this book support the school curricula?
- Is this book a high quality text?
- How relevant is this book to children and staff?
- Does this book appeal to our target age group?
- Is this book suitable for our target age group?
 - o Reading age / interest age
 - o Format, for example graphic novels can help reluctant readers decipher the story
 - o Consider including hi-low readers and accelerated readers
- Does this book support the development of independent learning?

Weeding

Continuous weeding of the library's collections is necessary to keep the book collection fresh, to maintain a useful and dynamic collection, to adapt to the changing needs of children and teachers, to accommodate changes in the school curriculum and to make the best use of floor and shelf space.

When deselecting books the same assessment criteria should be applied as above. In addition to this any materials which are

- out of date
- visibly damaged
- have not been borrowed from the library for more than 5 years

should be removed from the library and discarded.

Deselected items must be removed from the cataloging system and items may be donated or sent for recycling.

Donations

RETNS gladly accepts donations of books from our school community under the following conditions:

- Books should be in good condition, new or nearly new e.g. no damaged spines, no torn or missing pages
- Reference materials, including for example atlases and encyclopedias, should be no more than five years old
- Fiction books should be published within the last 10 years, with the exception of books by well-known authors and classics
- All books should be of a suitable reading level and age appropriate for our school community
- Non-fiction books should not reflect outdated stereotypes of racial or cultural groups in either the text or illustrations
- Textbooks and workbooks will not be accepted
- If items are offered for donation which already exist in the library the item in better condition should be retained

Future capacity

When resources (both human and financial) allow, RETNS Library will develop a number of Special Collections including a collection related to RETNS, local history, special language needs, e.g. learning English as a second language, foreign language books and a staff collection with teaching resources.

The library contains a number of topic boxes which need to be updated.

The library has a set of story bags which need to be maintained - this collection could be expanded.

4. Roles/responsibilities:

Board of Management

The Board of Management will regularly review this policy and its implementation. They will ensure that any library grants are used for that purpose and in consultation with the staff, prioritise fund-raising for the library when necessary.

Principal

As a member of the Library Committee, the Principal will work as part of the team that develops the library. The principal will monitor the implementation of this policy.

Staff

The staff will implement this policy and regularly review and provide feedback on the development of the library. Teachers and ANAs are encouraged to become members of the library committee.

Children

The children of RETNS will benefit from the implementation of this policy by staff and volunteer parent/guardians. There is scope for children in senior classes to become Junior Library Assistants.

Volunteer Parents/Guardians

A team of volunteers will help to maintain the library, led when possible by a volunteer librarian.

5. Related documentation:

The following external supports are available:

- [Libraries Ireland](#)
- Libraries Ireland [Library Services to Primary Schools](#)
 - o RETNS partner library branch is [Dundrum Library](#)
 - o Available supports include:
 - Class visit
 - Block loans
 - Educator cards
 - Class novels
 - Programme of events
 - Online resources, Pressreader, BorrowBox, Universal Class & Libby
 - Teaching resources
 - Specialist collections - local studies and sensory resources
- Library Association of Ireland, [School Libraries Group](#)
- [Children's Books Ireland](#)
- Educate Together

Other related documentation and websites are as follows:

RETNS Digital Learning Plan

RETNS Acceptable Use Policy

https://www.webwise.ie/teachers/digital_literacy/

6. Contact details:

Queries about this policy should be addressed to the Principal in the first instance:

The Principal

Rathfarnham Educate Together National School

Loreto Avenue

Rathfarnham

Dublin 14

Telephone: (01) 493 8677

E-mail: info@retns.ie

7. Review date:

This plan will be communicated to all present and future staff. It was presented to the Board of Management for ratification in April 2023. It is available to view on the school website or a hard copy is available from the school office.

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis but will undergo full review in 2026, or earlier if necessary.