



ST. PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Library



school policy

REVISED 2020

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1. Introduction

The library is a very treasured resource in St Patrick's NS. It is used by pupils throughout the school, as well as by all staff, and it is generously supported by parents. This policy is the result of a process of collaboration between teachers, support staff, Board of Management, parents and pupils.

The development of reading and the use of library facilities has always been encouraged in St Patrick's. During the major development programme of 2006/2007, the school acquired a dedicated room for its library and this was resourced to the highest standard, thanks mainly to the generosity of donations and the efficient management by the then school Librarian, Ms Lorna McCrodden. The room was fitted with wall-mounted and mobile shelving, as well as storage for essential library supplies. The shelves were filled with books and the Library management system, *ALICE*, was installed. This main library was complemented by class-based libraries in all classrooms and SET rooms.

Following Ms McCrodden's retirement 2015, a review was undertaken and a committee of parents and staff was formed to manage, maintain and develop the library facilities. Advice was sought from former parent and local librarian, Ms Kathy Scott, and a decision was taken to employ her on a part-time basis from March to December 2016. During this period Ms Scott culled the stock of old and out-of-date books, purchased a large number of new books, reorganised the shelving and launched several initiatives to encourage reading for pleasure, chief among these being the opening of the library each morning during the school assembly period. Funding difficulties meant that by the end of 2016 it was no longer possible to employ Ms Scott and from January 2017 all work in the library is done on a voluntary basis.

2. Rationale

This policy has been developed:

- to inform the school community of the facilities available and of how these facilities are provided and managed
- to facilitate the structuring of a timetable to allow equal and uninterrupted library access to all classes
- to ensure efficient use of the school library resources (and their protection)
- to facilitate the development of a library knowledge and information skills programme suitable for the different age-groups within the school.

3. Relationship to characteristic spirit of the school

In St. Patrick's NS, pupils are encouraged to reach their full educational potential, by developing intellectual skills combined with a spirit of inquiry and the capacity to analyse issues critically and constructively, while developing expressive, creative and artistic abilities. We strive to instil a 'thirst' for knowledge and a love of learning in all pupils through the provision of a stimulating and learner-friendly school environment. The school library is considered to be an integral part of this environment and the committee strives at all times to ensure that it fulfils its supportive role in the implementation of the curriculum for all students.

4. Aims and objectives

By introducing this policy, St. Patrick's NS hopes

- to benefit pupil learning
- to foster a love of reading and an appreciation of literature
- to develop an adequately resourced library that fulfils the above ideals
- to provide a stimulating environment conducive to enjoyable reading
- to support the team of parents who manage the library on a voluntary basis
- to liaise as partners with all parents in promoting literacy in the school and home.

5. Content of policy

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The provision, organisation and development of library resources in the school are no longer listed as the duties of a member of the in-school management (ISM) team within the structures of the school. They have become the sole responsibility of a committee which is made up of parent volunteers, 2/3 members of the teaching staff and the School Principal. The committee meets on a regular basis to discuss progress, plan for future events and allocate tasks that need to be done.

Library Committee volunteers agree to follow all school policies and practices relating to engagement with the Library and with the children, eg the school's Garda Vetting process.

5.2 Library facilities

The school has a dedicated library. A large selection of books, suitable for all classes, age-groups and abilities is available to the children. The stock is under constant review and is updated regularly. Picture books and other reading materials for the junior classes are shelved on the mobile cases while fiction for independent readers is shelved on the wall cases in A – Z order. Non-fiction material is shelved separately according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System (simplified version).

The library is open each morning from 08.25 until 08.45 (the twenty minutes from school opening until the start of formal class). At this time, the library desk is supervised by two parent volunteers who check out the books, check in and shelve returns and assist children to choose suitable reading material.

Each class is timetabled to use the library on a bi-weekly basis with a trial timetable in 2016/17 Term 3 that allows for classes to visit in small groups (8-10 pupils) to ensure that each child gets individual attention and assistance when choosing his/her books. This trial system is possible, thanks to the generous time dedicated to the Library by B Fitzmaurice, former Deputy Principal at the school.

Each classroom has its own selection of books stocked from the main library and which teachers may change on a regular basis. Children can access the class books on an informal basis when they have completed their work or at the teacher's discretion.

5.3 Lending and record keeping

St Patrick's uses the Aladdin data management system for many aspects of school record keeping and its very comprehensive library module is now used for book cataloguing, checking in and out, transferring books from the main library to class libraries and vice versa, tracking most popular books, etc. The library is equipped with two laptops along with scanners and all parent volunteers are trained in the use of the Aladdin system.

5.4 Care of books

- Pupils are permitted to have up to three books on loan at any one time and the usual loan period is three weeks. They are expected to care for the books that they borrow and to return them by the end of the designated loan period in the same condition as that in which they were issued.
- Reminders are sent by e-mail in respect of overdue loans but there is no fine system in operation.
- It is understood that books sustain a certain amount on wear and tear through normal usage, but those that suffer undue damage eg damp, mould, food stains/residue, torn/missing pages or covers, are subject to a replacement fee.
- Lost books are subject to a replacement fee.

5.5 Calendar of events

- As of 2017, St Patrick's NS is a member of the *School Library Association*, which offers support and advice to those involved in school libraries. Subscription to be paid annually
- St Patrick's NS is a member of *Children's Books Ireland* – a wonderful source of knowledge about children's literature, both fiction and non-fiction. Subscription to be paid annually

- An *Autumn Book Fair* is usually held each year. As well as giving pupils an opportunity to view and purchase new books, the school earns vouchers from all sales which are spent on replenishing and updating library stock
- *World Book Day* is celebrated during the spring term. Pupils join in a range of activities, organised by the Library volunteers. These have included:
 - dressing up as characters from favourite stories
 - drawing or taking pictures of family and friends 'getting caught out reading'
 - writing book reviews
 - storytelling sessions and guest readers or speakers
 - book surveys on reading habits
 - books swaps
- A *second-hand book sale* takes place each year to raise funds for the library
- *Reading Challenges* are organised on an occasional basis to encourage children to focus on a particular genre or author.

5.6 Funding

- Funding for the library comes from a number of sources
 - Direct monetary donations made by individual parents with specific instructions that they are to be spent on the library
 - An annual book sale
 - The Scholastic Book Fair (provides vouchers not money)
 - PTA general funds
 - Other
- Regardless of source, all monies are managed by the Treasurer of the PTA and are subject to the PTA rules of governance on spending, under the supervision of the Board of Management.

6. Success criteria

Indicators of the success of this policy's include

- annual staff review
- pupils' feedback
- teacher observation
- continual liaison with parents.

7. Roles and responsibilities

While originally the role of leadership of the Library was included as part of an In-School Management post, the Library is currently coordinated by an energetic, enthusiastic and highly

committed PTA Library Committee. The committee aims to include parents from all classes throughout the school, as well as staff nominees. Posts of responsibility, which include Chairperson, Secretary and ICT coordinator, are reviewed at the end of each year.

8. Ratification and communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management, after which it was made available directly to all staff, and to parents through the school's office and the school website.

9. Implementation

The policy was implemented following ratification.

10. Review

While it is constantly under informal review, this policy will be fully reviewed in 2023.

Signed: _____

Canon D Mungavin
Chairperson
Board of Management

R Harper
Principal

Date: _____