



Paroo Shire Council

Council Policy	
Policy Name:	Library Management – Children and Young People
Policy Number:	GP-014
Version:	1.0
Commencement and Review:	This policy will commence from and will be reviewed 2 years from the commencement date.
Document Owner:	Library Team Leader
Approval Date:	16/07/2019
Meeting Resolution:	M19/150

1 Statement of Intent

To provide guidance to Library employees in regard to children and young people in Paroo Shire Council (PSC) Libraries and the responsibilities of the parent/carer.

2 Commencement and Review of Policy

This Policy will commence from 17/07/2019. It replaces all other Library Management – Children and Young People Policies (Whether written or not).

This Policy will be reviewed 2 years from the commencement date or earlier if deemed necessary through changes to legislation or business practice. Minor amendments that do not impact upon the intent of the Policy may be made in consultation with and approved by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

3 Application of Policy

This policy applies to all employees, agent and/or contractor conducting business with or on behalf of Council who are employed at the Library, while on duty.

4 Definitions

Child or Children	Refers to young people aged 10 years and under
Young Adult	Refers to young people aged 11 years to 18 years inclusive
Child at risk of harm	Is a child for whom Library staff has concern for their safety, welfare or well being
Duty of care	Is defined as the legal duty to take reasonable care so that others aren't harmed
Unattended Child	Refers to child who is out of sight of their parent/carer

5 Council Library Management – Children and Young People Policy

5.1 Policy Aim

The aim of the Library Management - Children and Young People Policy (the Policy) is to clarify the role of Paroo Shire Council Library employees with regard to children and young adults and to define the responsibilities of the parent/carer.

This Policy seeks to reaffirm:

Paroo Shire Council's commitment to providing a safe environment for users of its facilities;

The responsibilities of Council staff with regard to supervision of children within Library premises

The responsibilities of the parent/carer in ensuring the welfare of their child/children

5.2 Scope

Paroo Shire Council welcomes children and young people into its Libraries for educational and recreational purposes including school work, reading, attending organized programs or activities, meeting friends and borrowing items. Libraries strive to provide a welcoming environment, and provide targeted resources and programs to meet the needs of children and young adults.

The Paroo Shire Council has a duty of care towards all children and young adults using the Library. The safety of Library customers and staff is the most important consideration at all times.

This Policy has been written to ensure the safety of children, young adults and staff and their enjoyment of PSC Libraries.

5.3 Responsibility for Children

PSC Libraries are not licensed child-minding facilities and PSC Library staff cannot take responsibility for the supervision of children or young adults within Library premises.

Children under **5** must be supervised by a parent/guardian or responsible carer at least 18 years old. Supervision requires that the responsible person must be within sight of the child at all times.

Library staff DO NOT assume parental responsibilities when children and young adults enter the Library. The role of Library staff is to guide and assist children and young adults in finding and using Library resources. However library staff has authority to ban or insist upon the child/children/young person/young people vacating the library immediately if any of the following behaviours are exhibited;

- Swearing
- Fighting
- Bullying
- Misuse of library furniture etc.

The ban period time frame will be at the discretion of library staff who will take into consideration the degree of the behaviour. For example, if the library was full of tourists and a child/children/young person/young people were swearing this behaviour would warrant a two week ban but depending on the level of language exhibited. A combination of fighting and swearing would warrant at least a month long ban depending on the seriousness of the behaviour.

In an effort to support our schools with school attendance and dissuade truancy, library staff may refuse entry to known local school students on school days and during school time as well as students who have been suspended.

RATIONALE

It is our belief in refusing entry to the library and access to free Wi-Fi and other technology and robotics suspended students may rethink their actions in the future. After all a suspension is a punishment not a reward. The same applies to students who are absent because they are “sick”. Library staff or patrons do not wish to be exposed to contagious viruses. If the students are too sick to attend school they are too sick to be in the library.

Library collections are available to all Library users without restriction. PSC does not censor materials used in the Library or borrowed by children or young adults. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to monitor their child’s use of Library resources.

PSC does not monitor or control content accessed through the Internet. Parents/carers are responsible for their child’s use of the Internet, in accordance with the Library’s Internet Use Policy.

5.4 Unattended Children in the Library

PSC cannot take responsibility for children and young adults left unattended in the Library. Unattended children and young adults can be at risk in public places as they may:-

- leave the Library premises at any time
- hurt themselves
- become bored and disruptive to other customers
- become distressed or unwell
- Be approached by strangers.

Parents who leave a child unattended while on Library premises may be exposing their child/ren to potential harm and may be committing an offence under the *Child Protection Act 1999, Part 3, Division 1, s9*.

5.5 Disruptive Behaviour

PSC will not accept responsibility for the behaviour or actions of any children or young adults on Library premises. The behaviour of children and young adults in the Library is the responsibility of the children/young adults themselves, their parents/carers, any responsible person accompanying the child and if in a school group, their teachers, supervisors and the school they attend.

The following types of behaviour are not acceptable in PSC Libraries:-

- Misuse or damage of Library property
- Disrupting other Library users
- Verbal or physical abuse
- Running in the Library

If a child or young adult is behaving in a manner which is disruptive to other Library users or damaging to Library property as determined by Library staff, the child or young adult will be asked to leave and a ban may be imposed depending on the severity of the behaviour. This will be at the discretion of the library staff.

The PSC accepts no responsibility for children and young adults within library premises or after they have left the building.

5.6 Sick or Injured Children

If a child/young person becomes unwell or injured in a PSC Library, staff will do the utmost to contact the parent/guardian. Should the parent/guardian be uncontactable library staff will ring an ambulance or police.

An Incident Report Form must be completed as part of the First Aid process.

5.7 Use of Staff Toilets

Library users are not permitted to use staff toilets. Members of the public are not permitted in staff work areas for reasons of public liability. Information shall be provided at each Library with regard to the location of public toilets. Staff cannot accompany children or young adults to public toilets.

5.8 Library Activities and Programs

PSC provides a range of activities and programs for children and young adults in its Libraries. Age restrictions may apply to some sessions. Children attending such events must be supervised by a parent/carer or a responsible person who is 18 years or older.

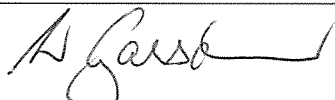
Group visits to Libraries must be made with appropriate supervision, which should be discussed at the time of booking the visit. On such occasions, children or young adults must be accompanied by a teacher or responsible person as specified by their School or Organisation.

6 Breach of Policy

A breach of this policy may result in may result in exclusion for an amount of time.to be discretion of Library Staff

Relevant Links

- Paroo Shire Council Children's and Young People's Policy

Endorsed		Date: 25/07/19
Name:	Norm Garsden	
Title:	Interim Chief Executive Officer, Paroo Shire Council	
Signature:		

Version Control

Date	Version	Meeting Resolution	Amendments / Comments
17/07/2019	1.0	M15/150	New Policy