

Managing Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

Date: September 2020

Review Date: September 2023



Policy Information

Policy Title	<i>Managing Unacceptable Behaviour</i>
Policy Number:	<i>POL061</i>
Version	<i>2</i>
Policy Sponsor	<i>Chief Executive</i>
Policy Owner	<i>Director of Library Services</i>
Committee and Date recommended for approval	<i>Services Committee, 17 September 2020</i>
Date approved by the Board	<i>15 October 2020</i>
Equality Screening Status	<i>Screened: 20 July 2020</i>
Rural Needs Impact Assessment Status	<i>Assessed: 20 July 2020</i>
Date Set For Review	<i>September 2023</i>
Related Documents	<i>Byelaws Code of Conduct for Staff Customer Feedback Policy Customer Service Standards Health and Safety Policy Safeguarding Policy Library Computers Conditions of Use Policy and Staff Guidance Lone Working Policy and Procedures Managing Unacceptable Behaviour: Staff Guidelines Managing Unacceptable Behaviour: Exclusion Procedures</i>

Managing Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Libraries NI is an inclusive service. We care about our customers, the community, each other and what we do. We want to provide a safe and welcoming environment which people can enjoy using. We expect staff and customers to engage in a positive manner and treat each other courteously and with understanding and respect.
- 1.2 The majority of people who use the public library service behave in an appropriate manner. However, there are occasions when library staff will be faced with customers whose behaviour towards them or other customers is unacceptable, or who are in breach of the Libraries NI Byelaws or other policies, procedures and guidelines. In such circumstances it is important that staff know how to respond to incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
- 1.3 This policy relates solely to unacceptable behaviour by customers when they are using library services or communicating with library staff.
- 1.4 This policy complements and reinforces the Libraries NI Byelaws which have been made under Section 7 of the Libraries Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and which help define and protect the conditions of use of library buildings and facilities.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
 - establish Libraries NI's expectations in relation to customer behaviour
 - indicate the types of customer behaviours that are considered unacceptable
 - set out Libraries NI's approach to managing and dealing with unacceptable behaviour by customers.

3. Policy

- 3.1 Just as Libraries NI expects staff to adhere to the Code of Conduct and to treat customers courteously, with understanding and respect, similarly it expects customers to respect staff and other library users.
- 3.2 Libraries NI does not expect staff to tolerate unacceptable behaviour from customers and will take action to deal with it in a fair, consistent and transparent manner in line with this policy and associated procedures.
- 3.3 For the purposes of this policy unacceptable behaviour may include, but is not limited to:
 - persistently disruptive behaviour
 - using violent, abusive or obscene language to library staff or other customers

- mean or unpleasant remarks
- making threats of any kind
- bullying, harassing or intimidatory behaviour
- malicious comments or allegations
- making derogatory remarks including inappropriate remarks in relation to community background, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or any other section 75 category
- aggressive, abusive or obstructive behaviour or behaving in such a way as might cause injury to another person
- damage to property.

3.4 This applies to behaviour in person, online, in writing or on the telephone.

3.5 Libraries NI recognises that in some circumstances, people may act out of character, e.g. in times of trouble, distress or as a symptom of certain types or stages of illness. Where there is a concern about unacceptable behaviour consideration will be given to individual circumstances when deciding what action to take.

3.6 A range of sanctions is available to deal with unacceptable behaviour. These range from a verbal warning to temporary or permanent exclusion from library premises and/or withdrawal of services. The level of the sanction will depend on the extent and seriousness of the behaviour. Customers will have the right of appeal against the imposition of a sanction.

3.7 Training, support and guidance will be provided for staff to help them to:

- recognise and manage situations which could lead to unacceptable behaviour and take preventative action
- diffuse difficult situations
- ensure their personal safety
- understand and implement appropriate sanctions if required.

4. Authority

Policy Sponsor: The Chief Executive is the Policy Sponsor.

Policy Owner: The Director of Library Services is the Policy Owner.

Policy Contact: The Head of Service are the Policy contacts.

5. Related Documents

Policies

- Customer Feedback Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Lone Working Policy and Procedures
- Library Computers Conditions of Use Policy and Staff Guidance

Procedures

- Byelaws
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Customer Service Standards
- Managing Unacceptable Behaviour: Staff Guidelines
- Managing Unacceptable Behaviour: Exclusion Procedures