



Children and Young People's Services Policy

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Policy Information	
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Policy Owner	<i>The Service Development Manager with responsibility for this area</i>
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Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Customer Feedback Policy</i> • <i>Digital Inclusion Policy</i> • <i>Engaging with Culture and Creativity Policy</i> • <i>Heritage Policy</i> • <i>Partnership Policy</i> • <i>Reading and Reader Development Policy</i> • <i>Safeguarding Policy</i> • <i>Stock Policy</i>

Libraries NI

Children and Young People's Services Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Libraries NI recognises that the most significant opportunities to improve people's health, wellbeing and life opportunities exist in the form of early interventions, particularly, though not exclusively, designed for children and young people.
- 1.2 Public libraries have traditionally contributed to children's cognitive development by providing opportunities for pre-school children and their parents and carers to engage in early learning activities. The development of a love of reading and of literacy skills is a key intervention and an important element in equipping children and young people to do well at school and to provide them with skills for later life. Research clearly shows that reading well is essential to tackling the effects of poverty on children. Free access to books, other reading material and information, whether in hard copy or online, together with opportunities to develop a love of reading from an early age engages children and young people in positive and enjoyable activities, improves literacy skills and facilitates lifelong learning, which in turn contributes to breaking the cycle of deprivation and educational under-achievement.
- 1.3 Libraries NI provide safe social spaces for children and young people to become engaged and enthused in shared experiences with other young people. These experiences can contribute positively towards the development of social skills and mental health.
- 1.4 Digital inclusion is essential for the social, economic and educational advantages of life in the modern world. Public libraries can provide supported opportunities for children and young people to engage with activities and programmes making use of new technologies, accessing information and learning, and becoming engaged citizens.
- 1.5 Libraries NI can contribute to improving early childhood development through support for parents and carers as a child's first educator.
- 1.6 Libraries NI can support formal and non-formal learning by facilitating and or delivering programmes to children and young people and through the provision of resources.
- 1.7 Libraries NI recognises the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and in particular the relevance to this policy of the articles relating to education, to access to information, to leisure, play and culture and to the rights of children from minority groups. Libraries NI respects the child in its delivery of services and activities, protects their privacy, stimulates access to reading materials and encourages children in their right to social and cultural participation.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to services for children and young people.

3. Policy

3.1 Libraries NI will:

- ensure its services are accessible to children and young people
- provide a safe, welcoming space for children and young people and their parents/carers
- provide a range of accessible stock, activities, services and programmes for all children and young people to support and foster a love of reading, literacy and learning
- ensure that staff have the necessary skills and training to support and deliver children's and young people's services
- work with partners to target support appropriately

3.2 In doing this it will:

- recognise the importance of early learning activities in contributing to cognitive and language development
- provide support for formal and non-formal learning for school aged children
- provide opportunities for family learning to take place
- facilitate the right of every child to information, literacy, cultural development, lifelong learning and creative programmes in leisure time
- support government agendas.

4. Authority

Policy Sponsor: The Deputy Head of Service with responsibility for Children's and Young People's Services is the Policy Sponsor.

Policy Owner: The Service Development Manager with responsibility for this area is the Policy Owner.

Policy Contact: The Manager with responsibility for this area is the Policy Contact.

5. Related Documents

Policies

- Customer Feedback Policy
- Engaging with Culture and Creative Development

- Heritage Policy
- Reading and Reader Development Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Stock Policy
- Digital Inclusion Policy
- Partnership Policy

Procedures

- Customer Feedback procedures