



# Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library Board

## Policy

<b>SECTION: OPERATIONAL</b>	<b>NO: OP-08</b>
<b>TITLE: Children's Services</b>	<b>Date: April 2022</b>
	<b>Next Review Date: April 2025</b>

### 1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 The Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library recognizes the importance of library services for children, and develops collections, services, and programs to meet their unique needs. The Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library uses the principles stated in the Ontario Library Association's *Children's Rights in the Public Library, 1998* as a framework for our library services for children. This policy defines the Library's framework children's services, as well as the responsibilities for the safety of children in the library.

### 2.0 Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 The services described in this policy are intended to meet the needs of children as well as those of parents, guardians and adults who work with children.

### 3.0 Services for Children

#### 3.1 Membership

- 3.1.1 Any child who lives within the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, or holds a library card with one of our reciprocal borrowing partners, is eligible for a Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library Card.
- 3.1.2 Parents or guardians must apply for membership on behalf of children under the age of twelve (12).
- 3.1.3 Users over the age of twelve (12) can apply for a library card without parental consent.

#### 3.2 Collections

- 3.2.1 Materials for a comprehensive children's collection shall be selected as per *OP-02 Collection Development Policy*.

- 3.2.2 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will be responsible for ensuring the maintenance and organization of the collection. The CEO may delegate responsibility for some aspects of the collection to other staff members.
- 3.2.3 The children's collection will meet high standards of quality and reflect the changing educational needs and personal interests of children as well as relevant trends.
- 3.2.4 As per *OP-02 Collection Development Policy*, while the Library aims to supplement and enrich the needs of students, materials are not purchased to fit any particular curriculum.
- 3.2.5 It is the sole responsibility of parents and legal guardians to monitor the reading and material selection of minor children.

### 3.3 Reference and Reader's Advisory

- 3.3.1 Children will have access equal access to Reference and Reader's Advisory services offered by the Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library.
- 3.3.2 Library staff will utilize the full range of collections, technology, and research tools to answer all users' reference questions and readers' advisory request. Staff will treat all information and readers' advisory requests with confidentiality and respect.
- 3.3.3 Library staff should use best practices, including reference interviews, to understand what each child wants and needs. Library staff should inform children of the variety of resources available to them, including both print and electronic resources.
- 3.3.4 Staff members may assist students in finding appropriate resources for school related projects, but will not complete research on behalf of students.

### 3.4 Programming

- 3.4.1 The Library will provide a variety of recreations, educations, cultural, and literacy-based programs for children and families.
- 3.4.2 Programs will be developed and delivered in accordance with *OP-10 Programming Policy*.

### 3.5 Computer Use

- 3.5.1 The Library provides unfiltered Internet use on library workstations which may be accessed by children. Parents and guardians are encouraged to monitor their children's computer use within the Library.

## 4.0 Library Space

- 4.1 The Library will endeavor to provide a well-planned area for children that is distinct from the adult area, within the limitations of our spaces.
- 4.2 This area will have furniture, shelves and equipment which are designed for and accessible to children.
- 4.3 The library will ensure that signage in the children's section is clear and age appropriate.

4.4 The children's area is an interactive learning environment where controlled noise levels are tolerated and where users are invited to explore library materials and services in their own way.

## **5.0 Staffing**

- 5.1 The board will support ongoing staff training and professional development in children's services as staffing and budget allows.
- 5.2 The CEO and staff will work together to identify ongoing training needs and opportunities related to children's services, collections and programming.
- 5.3 While library staff may assist a young person in finding materials they do not act in place of a parent. Parents, guardians and caregivers are responsible for supervising all aspects of their own children's library use.

## **6.0 Intellectual Freedom**

- 6.1 Children have the right to intellectual freedom and are entitled to open access to all information and services throughout the Library.
- 6.2 All children will have equal access to the full range of services and materials available to other users.
- 6.3 In accordance with the Ontario Library Association's *Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual*, 1998, staff will not censor material.

## **7.0 Responsibility for Children in the Library**

- 7.1 The Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library recognizes that children of all ages have a right to a welcoming, respectful, supportive and safe environment when they visit the library. However, the library is a busy public place and library staff cannot assume responsibility for children left unattended within our public facility. Responsibility for the welfare and behaviour of children using the library ultimately rests with the parent/guardian or an assigned caregiver.
- 7.2 The library expects parents, caregivers and teachers to:
  - 7.2.1 Not leave children requiring supervision unattended in or about library premises
  - 7.2.2 Monitor the use of services and collections by children under their care
  - 7.2.3 Be responsible for borrowed materials and fees incurred by children under their care
  - 7.2.4 Be responsible for the appropriate behaviour of children under their care.
- 7.3 Children ten (10) years old and younger must be accompanied by an adult while in the Library.
- 7.4 Children over the age of seven (7) attending programs may be supervised by library staff, however this supervision extends only to the scheduled time of the program. Caregivers of children under the age of seven (7) are expected to be present for the duration of all programs. Parents who have questions about program supervision should contact the library in advance of the program.

7.5 The Library is not an alternative to appropriate childcare. Children should not be left alone in the Library for an extended period of time. Library staff who are concerned about the wellbeing of unattended children in the Library should notify the CEO.

## **8.0 Children's Conduct in the Library**

8.1 Children are expected to follow the library's Patron Code of Conduct at an age appropriate level.

8.2 The Code of Conduct for Children is as follows:

8.2.1 I will respect people in the Library

- I will keep my voice at a reasonable volume and use respectful language; no yelling, screaming, bullying, or swearing.
- I will follow the directions given by Library Staff
- I will respect the personal space of others in the Library; I will not wrestle, rough-house, hit, or push others in the Library.

8.2.2 I will respect the Library's space and collections

- I will handle library books and equipment carefully, and will not intentionally break or damage things.
- I will not use sporting equipment in the Library, including items from the Library collection
- I will clean up after myself in the Library

8.2.3 I will be safe in the Library

- I will use library furniture and equipment as intended; I will not climb or stand on furniture.
- I will not run, climb, or throw things in the Library
- I will follow the instructions given by Library Staff members or volunteers when in the Library or at a Library Program.

8.3 Staff members will provide children with warnings if their behaviour violates the Code of Conduct. If repeated warnings are required parents will be notified and may be asked to remove their child from the Library.

8.4 If a child's behaviour threatens the safety of patrons, staff, or their own wellbeing, or results in the destruction of Library property they may be asked to leave the library immediately. Parents and/or authorities may be contacted depending on the severity of the situation.

History			
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