



Library Borrowing Policy

PURPOSE

To outline to our school community the Department's and Maryborough Education Centre's (MEC) policy requirements relating to borrowing books from the Library.

SCOPE

This policy applies to students in all year levels and staff responsible for staff assisting students to borrow.

RATIONALE

MEC has developed this Library Borrowing Policy in consultation with the school council to support student borrowing by:

- providing opportunities for students to borrow books based on personal interest
- providing opportunities for students to borrow/read unseen reading material
- encouraging students to enrich or extend their reading knowledge
- fostering good lifelong learning reading habits
- supporting partnerships with the school community

POLICY

At MEC all students have the right to borrow books which are;

- purposeful
- curriculum-aligned
- appropriate to students' skill level and age
- designed to help students develop as independent learners
- monitored by the teacher
- where appropriate, provide opportunities for parents/carers to partner in their child's learning.

TEXT SELECTION AND MATURE BOOKS POLICY

Part One: Definitions

Text: A broad term which encompasses fiction and non-fiction. It includes books, magazines, newspapers, audio and visual material, computer programs.

Censorship: Refers to:

1. the deliberate restriction of access to, and removal, alteration, or suppression of texts on moral, political and/or authoritarian grounds;
2. the less conspicuous, and therefore more insidious, teacher censorship whereby the potential for conflict is avoided by pre-censoring materials.

Selection: Distinguished from censorship by the intentions of the selector, not the effects. Texts should be selected for their strengths.

Part Two: Selection of Text

MEC students and staff need access to a comprehensive library and skills to enable them to access information.

The texts of English are spoken, written and visual, include samples of different genres and cater for students with diverse interests and abilities.

Texts selected for MEC should:

- aid in development of factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical judgments.
- encompass a wide range of voices including those of students and, of the marginalised. Lists should aim to represent as wide a range of voices as possible: all genders, historical and contemporary, Australian and non-Australian, young and old. In particular, the representation of Australian voices should include Aborigines and voices from outside a white Anglo-Saxon cultural heritage.
- assist students to make informed judgments in their daily lives.
- where possible, provide material on opposing sides of controversial issues, so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

Part Three: Censorship at MEC

MEC is committed to the principles of educational freedom.

Staff should not exercise censorship in the selection of materials. Professional practice should come before personal bias.

Staff, while recognizing that censorship exists and that powers of censorship are legally vested in state and federal governments, should resist attempts by individuals or organized groups within the community to determine this aspect of English Curriculum.

Part Four: Mature Content Books

All MEC students are free to access any text in the MEC library. As we are a P-12 school, a Mature Content category has been introduced in order to inform parents and carers about their children's reading choices and to facilitate discussion around texts at home.

These books are clearly marked with a red sticker near their MEC Library barcode. Students who borrow a book labelled as Mature Content will receive a text message home to inform parents and carers about their child's choice of book and to encourage conversation about these themes at home.

Criteria for a Mature Content Book

Books at MEC are marked as Mature Content if they:

- Include graphic portrayals of violence, nudity, sex acts, drug use, etc.
- Include themes that require a mature outlook, including but not limited to:
 - sex and sexual relationships;
 - drug use;
 - family violence;
 - eating disorders;
 - suicide and self-harm; etc.

Themes that do NOT require a Mature Content classification

Books with themes such as gender and sexuality, puberty, mental health issues, etc, do not warrant a Mature Content rating, *unless they also include portrayals or themes listed above.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Borrowing timeline:

- students return books within a two weeks
- staff return bulk borrows within one month

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on 23rd June, 2021 and is scheduled for review as part of the school's 3 year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on 23rd June, 2021.

Signed:



Anita Ford
School Council President

Date: 15.7.2021