

Stock Management Policy Louth County Library 2006

1. Introduction:

Louth County Library service will ensure that all resources, regardless of format, are effectively managed by library staff. In addition, it supports lifelong learning in our community and caters for the cultural, recreational and information needs of the local population.

Louth County Library aims to provide a comprehensive selection of stock as cost-effectively as possible. This stock management and development policy has been produced to provide clear and positive guidelines to staff involved in stock selection and management. We will attempt to take a broadly uniformed approach to stock provision in Louth, although individual library stocks will be tailored to meet the needs of their local communities.

1.1 Aims

This plan will reflect the aims of Louth County Library, which are:

1. To provide as wide a range of quality stock (book and non-book) as budget constraints allow
2. To endeavour to meet the needs of the communities served by each branch library, mobile service and schools service and of the community of Louth as a whole
3. To constantly monitor performance and to make changes where necessary
4. To promote and encourage lifelong learning and literacy
5. To manage, stock, staff and systems so as to maximise the use and effectiveness of all resources
6. To promote reading and creative writing to adults and young people

1.2 Monitoring Stock

Monitoring stock ensures that we:

1. Take account of current demands
2. Identify stock gaps
3. Identify appropriate stock levels
4. Identify material which should be transferred to reserve or withdrawn
5. Monitor the condition and currency of stock
6. Allocate resources (annual book fund should be divided fairly between each branch with relevant stock bought for each branch and good communication between branch librarians and line manager regarding what type of stock is required)
7. Develop stock plans i.e. periodic stock-takes, perhaps branch by branch or by collection within branch & permanent display of books for sale in larger branches.

2. Selection Criteria

Selection criteria will be applied to ensure that the most effective use of available resources is made and that standards of quality are maintained throughout the service. The agreed criteria will apply to all media and formats.

The general principles of stock selection will be as follows:

Accessibility – physical content and format of the item must be suitable

Cost – cost will be balanced against the benefits of the item to overall stock provision

Irish or Ireland-related – this will be looked on preferentially, but with the above criteria in mind

Local Material – as for Irish content

Cultural & Social Diversity – this will be reflected

Potential Popularity – purchases will reflect bestsellers, but duplicates should not be bought unnecessarily as these result in large volumes of stock being changed to reserve in H.Q. Store

3. Selection Methods

In most cases stock selection will be undertaken using the following methods:

1. selections from supplier visits and shelf buys from showroom visits and local retailers
2. selections from publishers' catalogues and websites
3. Special requests from borrowers (within reason and where item is deemed a suitable purchase for the library)
4. Individual publishers/authors advertising their stock

4. Management of Collection

Optimum use is a key principle that applies to all lending stock, and as such, materials will be circulated around all service points using appropriate systems and procedures depending on the genre of stock.

In the smaller branches in particular, certain collections can be rotated a number of times throughout the year, e.g. AFR or AFW etc. The branch librarians should be able to work a rotation schedule out amongst themselves as required.

The library catalogue will be available through all access points within the Library Service.

Each library will ensure that the material is effectively promoted through displays, events, author visits etc.

4.1 Care and Repair

The Library Service undertakes to ensure that the condition of the stock is of a high quality. Staff should consistently review the condition of resources and take appropriate action. There is a budget allocated to rebinding and repair of stock.

4.2 Disposal

Items will be identified for withdrawal when unfit for issue or when they have reached circulation capacity. In the case of children and young people's stock particular vigilance should be taken with board books and picture books. It is important both from a safety point of view and the awareness that these types of

book often represent a child or family's first contact with the library service and therefore there is a need to create a favourable impression.

Unique copies will be retained in reserve stock and items of local interest be held in the relevant reference section. Due to space constraints in the H.Q. Store and Drogheda Store, attention needs to be drawn to the amount of, and quality of stock being sent to reserve on a continual basis. If the correct type of stock is being purchased for each branch large volumes of stock should not need to go to reserve so frequently. A pattern of regular shelving needs to begin in each store to ensure there is no overload of boxes at any one time.

It is anticipated that both stores be reviewed twice yearly with out of date and duplicate copies of stock being withdrawn.

Where singles tapes/CD's are damaged in a talking book set, replacements will be purchased where possible.

Once material has been identified for disposal it will be offered for sale to the public. Stock should not be offered for sale if it is overly tatty, i.e. missing pages, broken spines or extensive staining. Such stock should be withdrawn from the system in the normal way and recycled.

A decision has to be made as to the frequency of "one-off" booksales or the possibility of permanent sales, i.e. an area in library where books for sale are kept on constant display. Materials not thus sold may be offered to local charities, institutions such as nursing homes, hospitals or crèches etc.

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains timely and relevant