

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR RECONSIDERATION OF CHALLENGED MATERIALS:

A situation may arise where a resource, either during or after selection, is questioned about its suitability. In this circumstance, the resource should be reviewed with reference to the selection criteria listed in this policy, and with notice taken of the 'Statement on Freedom to Read' backed by the Australian Library and Information Association (see [Appendix 2](#)). It is not the policy of St Simon Peter Catholic Primary School to abridge the text, remove pages or otherwise distort an author's work.

Should a person wish to complain about a resource, the following process will be followed.

- The complaint needs to be stated in writing by completing a form to clarify what the actual complaint is ([Appendix 5](#) for sample form).
- Neither the resource, nor any copies of it, will be removed from circulation while it is reviewed. However, the Teacher Librarian and Principal (or Assistant Principal in the Principal's absence) will immediately review the material being complained about. If in the opinion of the Principal there is a problem, appropriate action will be taken.
- The complainant will be dealt with understanding and respect.
- The complainant will be given a copy of '[The general selection criteria for collection resources](#)' and '[Selection criteria by format](#)', and be encouraged to re-read or review the resource in the light of these criteria.
- All staff members connected to the resource in question will be informed of the complaint.
- The review committee will examine the complaint within five working days.
- The review committee will consist of the teacher librarian, the principal, the teacher responsible for language development and a parent representative from the Parents and Friends Association.
- Until the review committee has made a decision, the school will stay neutral about the worthiness of the resource. However the teacher librarian and any individual teachers are free to defend or criticize the challenged resource, according to their own interpretation of the policies and opinion of the material.
- The review committee will reconsider the suitability of the resource based on the Criteria for Selection of Materials and the Statement on Freedom to Read. They will refer to any available reviews whenever possible, CEO guidelines and will consider their decision with reference to the selection profile. It is not school policy to abridge a text and no text will be censored by the removal of pages or editing of footage because this contravenes the Copyright Act.
- When the decision is made, the principal will inform the complainant personally and in writing.
- The complainant has the right of appeal to the Catholic Education Office if s/he wishes.
- The resource and any copies of it will still remain on the shelf during any appeal process.
- If the complaint is upheld, the resource and any copies of it will be removed immediately from the library.
- If the complaint is turned down, the resource and any copies will remain in the library, with records kept accordingly about the complaint and the committee's

decision.

- If the same resource is challenged again, previous records should be referred to and the same course of action should be taken if the complaint goes ahead, using the Policies and Procedures for Reconsideration of Challenged Materials.
- Following the resolution, the review committee should evaluate how the review was handled and consider any possible improvements to the process for the future.

APPENDIX 1

Australian School Library Bill or Rights

School libraries are concerned with generating understanding of freedom and with the preservation of this freedom through the development of informed and responsible citizens. The responsibility of the school library is:

To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the pupils served.

To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards.

To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgements in their daily life.

To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contribution to our heritage.

To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate to the users of the library.

Source: The Australian School Library Association.

APPENDIX 2

Statement of Freedom to Read

The Australian Library and Information Association, believing that freedom can be protected in a democratic society only if its citizens have access to the information and ideas through books and other sources of information, affirms the following principles as basic and distinctive of the obligations and responsibilities of the librarian:

1. A primary purpose of a library service is to provide information through books and other media on all matters that are appropriate to the library concerned.
2. A librarian must protect the essential confidential relationship which exists between a library user and the library.
3. The functions of the librarian include: to promote the use of materials in the librarian's care; to ensure that the resources of the library are adequate to its purpose; to obtain additional information from outside sources to meet the needs of readers; to cater for interest in all relevant facets of knowledge, literature and contemporary issues, including those of a controversial nature; but neither to promote nor suppress particular ideas and beliefs.
4. A librarian, while recognising that powers of censorship exist and are legally vested in state and federal governments, should resist attempts by individuals or organised groups within the community to determine which library materials are to be, or not to be, available to the users of the library.
5. A library should not exercise censorship in the selection of materials by rejecting on moral, political, racial or religious grounds alone material which is otherwise relevant to the purpose of the library and meets the standards, such as historical importance, intellectual integrity, effectiveness of expression or accuracy of information which are required by the library concerned. Material should not be rejected on the grounds that its content is controversial or likely to offend some sections of the library's community.
6. A librarian should uphold the right of all Australians to have access to library services and materials and should not discriminate against users on the grounds of age, sex, race, religion, natural origin, disability, economic condition, individual lifestyle or political or social views.
7. A librarian must obey the laws relating to books and libraries, but if the laws or their administration conflict with the principles put forward in this statement, the librarian should be free to move for the amendment of these laws.

Adopted: 1971
Amended: 1979, 1985

Source: ALIA Handbook 1991-1992. Canberra ALIA, 1992, p.86.

APPENDIX 4

SELECTION CRITERIA BY FORMAT

Print Materials:

Selection Criteria for Books (hardbacks and paperbacks):

1. Is the shape and weight of the book appropriate for the intended audience?
2. How opaque is the paper? A young reader may be confused by a print that shows through the page.
3. Is the typeface suitable for the intended audience?
4. Is the spacing between words and between lines adequate for the young or reluctant reader?
5. Do the page layouts and colour add appeal and clarity to the text?
6. Is the book jacket attractive? Does it reflect the content of the book?
7. Are the illustrations placed within the text where they can be used easily, or are they bound together in an inconvenient location?

Selection Criteria for Periodical, Newspapers and Comic Books:

1. Is the content of interest to students or teachers?
2. Are subjects treated clearly in a well-organised manner?
3. Is the illustrative matter pertinent and adequately reproduced?
4. Is the format appropriate for the purpose of the magazine and the intended audience?
5. Are large-print items needed by any users?

Selection Criteria for Pamphlets:

1. Since many pamphlets are sponsored by groups or businesses, the extent of advertising must be considered. Does advertising dominate the presentation?
2. Regardless of whether the item contains advertising, is the message presented with bias and propaganda?
3. Is the information already provided elsewhere in the collection?

Selection Criteria for Graphics (posters, charts, graphs, tables, diagrams, cartoons, art prints and study prints) :

1. Is the information presented in an uncluttered manner?
2. Are non-relevant elements either de-emphasized or omitted?
3. Is there unity of presentation? Are the basic artistic principals of balance and harmony observed?
4. Is the lettering clear and legible?
5. Is the size large enough for the intended audience?
6. Does an art print give an accurate reproduction of colour and detail?
7. Are the framing and mounting durable?
8. Are there sufficient individual pictures in a series to show a sequence of information?

Moving Images:

Selection Criteria for Videos:

1. Do the programmes reflect adequate planning and effective presentations, creating a unified whole?
2. Does the telecast make use of the full range of television production techniques, or is it a filmed lecture?
3. Is the picture clear and not distorted? Is the sound recording audible and distinct?
4. Are the details easily discernible?
5. Is the same content available in a different format for less money?
6. Selection criteria for motion pictures can apply to videocassettes.
7. Where the class teacher and a member of the Leadership Team consider the video text suitable but its rating is above the recommended age group, then permission must be sought from the parent or guardian by letter and reply slip. If a parent or guardian declines consent, then where possible the student will be provided with an alternative text covering the same concepts.

Selection Criteria for Maps and Globes:

1. Is the map aesthetically pleasing? Does the colour treatment interpret the information.
2. Is the depth of detail suitable for the intended audience?
3. Is the map legible? Are symbols representational and clearly designed?
4. Is the item durable? Has plasticised or cloth-backed paper been used?
5. Is the surface glare proof?
6. Do details obscure essential information?

Auditory Formats:

Selection Criteria for Sound Cassettes and Compact Discs:

1. Does narration begin with attention-getting words to draw the listener's interest? Are key words or key statements emphasised to aid the listener? Are the sentences short and simple?
2. Is the sound free of distortion?
3. Are the length and quality of the performance appropriate to the intended audience?
4. Do labels give enough information to distinguish one item from another and give playback information?
5. Are tapes and discs compatible with available equipment?
6. Is equipment easy to use and portable?
7. Does the equipment ensure accurate, high-quality reproduction?
8. If the recording is based on a book is the recording consistent with the original?
9. Are the accompanying materials, such as a teacher's guide, of high quality?

Tactile Formats:

Selection Criteria for Games:

1. Is the packaging designed for the control of the pieces? If a piece is lost, can it be replaced locally?
2. Are the items durable?
3. Are the directions clear?
4. Are the content, reading level, time requirements, and required dexterity appropriate for the intended audience?
5. Does the game require a computer? Will it run on the media centre's resource?

6. Is the game too costly or elaborate for its intended users?

Selection Criteria for Models (models, dioramas):

1. Are size relationships of the part to the whole accurately portrayed?
2. Are parts clearly labelled?
3. Are colour and composition used to stress important features?
4. Will the construction withstand handling?

Instructional Systems:

Selection Criteria for Textbooks and Related Materials:

1. Is the content accurate and objective?
2. Does the content represent a broad spectrum of viewpoints on a given topic?
3. Are the visual materials correlated to the text?
4. Are bibliographies up to date? Do they include multimedia materials?
5. Is the treatment appropriate for the intended purposes and audiences?
6. Is the arrangement chronological or systematic?
7. Is the presentation free of racial or sexual stereotyping?
8. Is the type clear and are the pages uncrowded?

Selection Criteria for Multimedia Packages or Kits:

1. Does the kit create a unified whole? Is there a relationship between parts?
2. Is special equipment needed to use the materials included in the collection?
3. Do each of the items in the kit meet the criteria for that format?
4. Is the kit difficult to use?
5. Are the directions clear? Is adult guidance needed?
6. Does the kit fulfil a unique purpose not met by other materials within the collection? Is there room to store the materials?

Selection Criteria for Computer Programmes:

1. Is the content more appropriate for presentation on a computer than on other instructional media?
2. Is the content presented in the most appropriate strategy: tutorial, drill and practice, simulation, entertainment, or problem solving?
3. Does the prompt or help screen clearly tell the user how to proceed within the programme?
4. Is the programme designed to run on the user's computer? The brand, model, memory size, operating system, storage format, display technology (monitor and graphics system), and accessory equipment (mouse, game paddles, etc.) of the computer must be considered.
5. Does the user's computer system contain the peripherals required to run the programme?
6. Is the computer's DOS (disk-operating system) compatible with the software programme?
7. Are the graphics, colour, and sound used as integral aspects of the programme?
8. Does the user control the rate and sequence of the content presentation (unless timing is an integral part of the programme)?
9. Is the display of the text and/or graphics visually pleasing?
10. Can the user enter, use, and exit the programme with relative ease and independence?

11. Do the user-response options involving colour avoid common colour blindness problems?
12. Are the responses or feedback to both correct and incorrect answers appropriate?
13. Are the strategies for branching to correct answers or remedial instructions utilised when the student's response requires assistance?
14. Are on-screen instructions clear and easily understood?
15. Are the student guides and worksheets, the teacher guides, and the technical information adequate?
16. Is the documentation clear and carefully indexed?
17. Does the programme require the learner to be familiar with special terms or symbols related to the computer?

APPENDIX 5

Review of a Library resource.

Title of Resource: _____

Type of Resource: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

Brief description of what you dislike about this resource: _____

Relevant page nos. (if appropriate) _____

What effect do you think this will have on students: _____

Have you read/viewed the **whole resource**: _____

Do you know the literary critics view of this resource? _____

What action would you like the school to take? _____

Review of resource initiated by: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Response by Review Committee

Name (on behalf of committee) _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

