



**BROWNEGE ST MARY'S**  
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL  
*'Let your light shine'*

# School Library Policy

Date of next review: October 2025

Policy Lead (Name): A Crew

Date: September 2024

## School Mission Statement

Inspired by our Gospel Values we have a shared responsibility to:

- create an environment of welcome, love and respect for each member of our learning family.
- develop the unique gifts and talents of all, striving for excellence in everything we do.
- live out our commitment to love, service and justice in the local and global community.
- nurture the journey of faith and discovery for all
- celebrate and reflect on the love of God which is at the heart of all we are.

### **Rationale:**

At Brownedge St Mary's we believe that every child has the right to a exceptional, equitable and inspirational education. We believe

- The teaching of knowledge by it's definition includes both substantive and disciplinary subject knowledge and therefore skills are intertwined through content knowledge creating a knowledge-engaged curriculum taking account of local context and employment

*Acronyms to be aware of in relation to this policy:*

**CILIP:** Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

**CILIP SLG:** the CILIP School Libraries Group

**SLA:** School Library Association

**MLA:** Museum Libraries Archives Council

**ALA:** American Library Association

**IFLA:** International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

### **Use of the library and its resources**

All pupils and staff are required to treat the library, its staff and resources with respect in line with our **Home-School Agreement** and our whole school **Behaviour for Learning Policy**. Any instances of inappropriate or disruptive behaviour will be dealt with following the Behaviour for Learning policy and school systems.

Our library uses the Library Management System 'Accessit' to loan resources, track borrowing, manage pupil records, catalogue stock and report statistics, and all pupils and staff are members of the library. This automates when pupils enroll and they will each have an active account until they leave Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School. Pupil librarians are authorised with a limited, pupil-specific log-in to issue, return and renew books, but are not permitted to access the rest of Accessit's features in line with GDPR legislation.

Library users can borrow up to **three** resources at any one time. Stocked resources can also be reserved using our whole school library dashboard: <https://uk.accessit.online/brw11/#!dashboard>

Library resources are loaned for a period of two weeks. Pupils are expected to return their borrowed resources in a timely manner and in the condition in which they were received. **Pupils are liable to reimburse school for the standard replacement price of the resource if it is returned and has been lost, defaced or damaged.**

### **When resources are not returned:**

After two weeks, a message is sent to the pupil's school email address to remind them they have an overdue book/ resource, and that it should be returned as soon as possible. Pupils will receive three different overdue book reminder emails in total.

If the resource has not been returned or renewed within the next two weeks, a further message with a deadline of one week will be sent to pupils, alongside their parents/guardians, giving them the following options:

- **Renew** – visit the Library with the resource(s) to have them loaned for a further calendar month

- **Return** – Return the resource to the Library (using the Returns box in the entrance or by handing in to the staff librarian or pupil librarians). The Library does not charge late fees.
- **Replace** - if the resource has been lost or badly damaged, replace it/them with new or good quality secondhand copies
- **Reimburse** – reimburse the school for the cost or part of the cost of the resource – our standard fee of £5 per resource is payable via Parent Pay, in line with the DfE’s Charging and Remissions Policy<sup>1 7</sup>.

If the resource is still not returned, renewed, replaced or reimbursed within three calendar months of it being loaned, parents/guardians will be charged the flat fee of £5 via Parent Pay and the pupil will be unable to borrow further resources until this is done, or the resource is returned in original condition.

### **Selection Criteria for resources, events and visitors**

The Library SLT Link – Mrs A Crew - has overall responsibility for the selection of materials, events and speakers/visitors in our school library. Recommendations from school staff, pupils and parents and guardians will always be considered. New resources must meet the Brownedge selection criteria before purchase and/ or cataloguing.

Resources, such as books, are selected based on the needs of the library’s context and diverse user groups, which include all pupils from Year 7 to Year 11, as well as staff, special interest groups, the Careers department, intervention teams and extra-curricular groups. A wide range of resources are required to meet the needs of our diverse users. Our resources are focused primarily on what users will enjoy, but that will also challenge and extend their reading skills. This includes both fictional and non-fiction materials.

***“The British public library tradition supports the principles of intellectual freedom; free access to diverse information, ideas and knowledge; free expression; and democratic dialogue.” - MLA***

In selecting materials/events/speakers in the library, the school staff librarian\* will consider the ALA’s selection criteria<sup>2</sup>, judging them based on:

- Educational significance
- Relevance to school context needs
- Contribution to curriculum topics
- Favourable reviews found in standard selection sources (National Literacy Trust, Reading Agency, Book Trust, CILIP, SLA, Scholastic Reads, Waterstones book awards and other reputable industry specialists)
- Favourable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel, including school staff
- Reputation, authority, and significance of the author/ theme
- Validity and appropriateness of material
- High artistic quality and/or literary style
- Quality and variety of format
- Value commensurate with cost and/or need
- Timeliness or permanence
- Providing balance to controversial issues in a manner compliant with our ‘Protected Characteristics and our resources’ section, with consideration of guidance from the MLA<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department for Education: Charging and Remissions Policy guidance documentation, May 2018:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities> (Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

<sup>2</sup> ALA Selection Criteria Guidance page: <https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/selectionpolicytoolkit/criteria> (Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

<sup>3</sup> Museum Library Archive Council – Guidance on the Management of Controversial Material in Public Libraries: <https://nag.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/MLA-guidance-on-the-management-of-controversial-material-in-public-libraries.pdf> (Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

## **Protected Characteristics and our resources**

Our library recognises and celebrates the diverse user groups of our school, but also the knowledge and merit reading resources can offer to pupils and staff in order to widen perceptions, perspectives, knowledge, understandings of self, others and the world around us. For this reason, we are proud to offer diverse and inclusive materials in our library, in accordance with our school ethos and curriculum.

To enhance our teachings within subject specialisms and Learning for Life curriculum, our school staff librarian\* will consider material selection that is inclusive and educational in relation to all of the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010<sup>4</sup>. We retain the right to not stock resources which incite 'hate speech' or extremist ideologies which could harm or offend, linked to each and all of the protected characteristics.

## **Removing from Circulation Criteria**

Resources are "written off" from the library stock on a rolling basis. Reasons for 'writing off' any library resources or stock would be: lack of use; outdated or inaccurate information; overall condition; and/or lack of appeal to user groups.

After being 'written off', resources are, in order of priority:

- Given to school staff for classroom use
- Given to pupils for individual use
- Given to school staff for individual use using the Staff Reading area
- Donated to a local charity
- Sold (i.e. on Vinted) with funds circulated back to buying new library resources

## **Acquisitions and Donations**

Resources are purchased with the assistance of the Finance Department and the best price will be sought from any distributors or suppliers. If appropriate, timeliness and availability of stock may take priority over cost.

The library gratefully accepts donations of good quality, relevant titles. Please note that we cannot guarantee that donated books will be added to our stock. If deemed inappropriate for the Library, materials will be given away or disposed of as in the process for 'written off' library stock.

## **Access to Resources Policy**

### **1.1 Child Fiction, Young Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction - General**

Our pupils are unique and diverse: in age, maturity level, life experience, interests, protected characteristics and ability. Therefore not all resources in our library space will be suitable for every pupil. Similarly, while the school staff librarian\* will encourage and guide pupils toward suitable resources, they cannot gauge suitability of every resource for every pupil. Brownedge St Mary's High School Library has a mission to be the 'gateway' to knowledge, rather than the 'gatekeepers', and our library collection of curated materials is a safe and reliable space for access to information. For this reason, we support our pupils' freedom of access to information and right to read, as established by British legislation, IFLA<sup>5</sup> and CILIP ethical frameworks.

<sup>4</sup> Government Equalities Office and Human Rights Commission, June 2015: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance> (Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

<sup>5</sup> IFLA President Statement, June 2023: <https://www.ifla.org/news/empowering-libraries-to-lead-in-developing-collections-presidential-statement-on-censorship/> (Accessed 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

In line with frameworks and legislation, including the CILIP, CILIP SLG and SLA joint *Interim Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom in School Libraries*<sup>6</sup>, the school staff librarian and/ or teaching staff may guide pupils towards what is deemed age-appropriate reading. Our library stock has a designated Young Adults section of mature reading materials aimed at ages 14+ so pupils will be clear which resources are older in themes and content.

As a school, we do not limit access to written materials published for children and young adults, nor does it require guardian permission for pupils to borrow these. This includes fiction and non-fiction.

Whilst all newly purchased resources will be assessed using the ALA's selection criteria as above, it is impossible for the Librarian to read every book acquired.

Brownedge St Mary's Catholic High School endorse parental engagement in their child/ren's reading journey, whether for academic or recreational purposes. Parents and guardians will receive an 'Introduction to the Library' letter at the start of Year 7, and all new pupils will have a guided library induction. If parents/guardians believe a resource that their child has brought home for personal reading is unsuitable, they should ask their child to return it to the school library. We always welcome book recommendation requests and are happy to help pupils find something more suitable.

## **1.2 Graphic Novels/Manga and Visual Media**

All pupils are welcome to borrow unrated graphic novels or graphic novels rated T [Teen] or below. We do not currently stock graphic novels or manga at T+ level [Teen plus 16+] or M [mature 18+].

The Library does not currently stock any visual media – in the event that such stock becomes available pupils will need parent/guardian permission to borrow titles rated as above their chronological age.

## **1.3 Visual Impairment and Reading Resources**

Concurrent with the protected characteristics of our pupils and staff, if a member of our school has a visual impairment or is registered blind, we will use assistive technology to ensure that that individual has access to engaging and educational reading materials in the most appropriate media(s) for them and their need.

## **Complaints and Stock Reconsideration**

We request that all complaints about library resources and reading materials be directed to the SLT Link for the library in the first instance – Mrs A Crew. We will endeavour to respond to and resolve the complaint within ten working days, with the assistance of the wider senior leadership team.

In the rare instance that this process does not resolve the issue, a formal written stock reconsideration request should be submitted via email or written letter to [info@st-maryshigh.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:info@st-maryshigh.lancs.sch.uk).

During reconsideration, the resource will be assessed by a **reconsideration committee** consisting of the Headteacher, Senior Deputy Headteacher the SLT link for the Library. Members of the Senior House Council may also be invited to express their views in order to ensure that pupil voice continues to be embedded in school decisions. The item will not be removed from the Library during this assessment period.

At the end of the reconsideration, one of the following actions will take place:

1. The resource will remain in its current position within the library.
2. The resource will be relocated to a different collection and/or an age guidance label will be added to the item.
3. The item will be removed from the library stock.

The complainant(s) will be informed in writing of this decision and why it has been made. After an item has been considered, it will not be subject to reconsideration for another five years.

<sup>6</sup> Interim Joint Position Statement, May 2022: [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cilip.org.uk/resource/resmgr/cilip/policy/new\\_ethical\\_framework/cilip\\_s\\_ethical\\_framework.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cilip.org.uk/resource/resmgr/cilip/policy/new_ethical_framework/cilip_s_ethical_framework.pdf) (Accessed 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024)

## **Privacy Policy**

Concurrent with IFLA, CILIP, and ALA ethical standards framework, we do not disclose pupil borrowing records or item requests to outside parties (including parents/guardians) unless:

- There is a Safeguarding concern, in which case only relevant information will be passed to the Safeguarding team.
- An item is more than three months overdue and other avenues of requisition have been exhausted.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) have made a Subject Access Request as permitted by GDPR. Please note that pupils over the age of 12 must give their consent before their data can be disclosed.