

STOCK POLICY

1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Blackpool Borough Libraries Mission Statement

To improve the quality of life for all people in Blackpool by developing wide-ranging resources which meet their needs for information, lifelong learning, cultural enrichment and personal enjoyment.

1.2 Aims

In line with the mission statement we aim to provide a broad based and varied stock relevant to local needs. In order to achieve this aim, stock should:

- balance user requirements with the need to reflect and promote the needs of a multi-cultural society
- promote literacy and knowledge
- support life-long learning
- meet information needs of the local community
- support the economic life of the local community
- provide for different levels of ability and varying levels of interest
- provide variety in fiction and non-fiction

Objectives

- to provide information for library users regarding the selection and provision of stock
- to foster a consistent approach to the selection of a borough wide stock
- to ensure best value in the purchase of stock, its distribution and exploitation

2. DEFINITION OF LIBRARY STOCK

Stock is defined as books, printed music, audio-visual and multi media resources, maps, newspapers and periodicals, and local history material.

3. PROVISION OF STOCK

3.1 Each library will provide stock relevant to local needs at a level appropriate to its size, known demand and available resources.

3.2 Blackpool Central Library, as the largest library, will hold a wider range of lending stock which reflects in depth and specialised needs. It will be the main centre for reference enquiries and house the majority of the local history material.

3.3 All libraries will benefit from extensive circulation of stock. Items bought for individual service points should be regarded as a borough wide resource available through the request system.

3.4 Staff have a responsibility to select the most suitable format of stock to meet the needs and provide the greatest benefit to library users.

3.5 Donations are subject to the same criteria as purchased stock. Blackpool Libraries reserve the right to decide on the location of donations selected for stock and to dispose of those items which are not required.

3.6 The majority of requests for items not in stock will be satisfied through the inter-library loan service within the conditions applied by the British Library and Regional loan systems. Requested material will also be considered for purchase but complete coverage cannot be attempted and the overall balance of stock must be maintained. Normal selection criteria will apply.

4. STOCK SELECTION.

4.1 Responsibility

Responsibility for the selection of stock within the overall guidelines rests primarily with professional staff selecting on a borough wide basis. Feedback from other library staff will be an important part of the selection process to ensure take up of a variety of expertise and wide knowledge of library user needs.

4.2 Censorship

Library stock must represent, within the financial limits, all shades of opinion, including controversial and experimental literature. Blackpool Libraries subscribe to the following Library Association statement: -

“The function of a library service is to provide, so far as resources allow, all books, periodicals etc, other than the trivial, in which its readers claim legitimate interest. In determining what is legitimate interest the librarian can safely rely upon one guide only – the law of the land. If the publication of such matter has not incurred penalties under the law it should not be excluded from libraries on any moral, political, religious or racial grounds alone, to satisfy any sectional interest.

The public are entitled to rely upon libraries for access to information and enlightenment upon every field of human experience and activity. Those who provide library services should not restrict this access except by standards which are endorsed by law.”

Publications, which have not incurred any penalties under the law, will not be excluded merely because they are controversial but will be evaluated and judged by the selection criteria.

4.3 Selection Criteria

4.3.1 General Criteria

- aims as defined in section 1.2
- appeal to the reader
- content
- legibility
- format
- currency
- quality of presentation and production
- price
- comparison with existing material on the same subject

4.3.2 Fiction

Blackpool Libraries recognise the need to support and promote the novel as a literary form by purchasing works by established and new authors. These works will include examples of the regional novel, first novel, experimental novel and novels in translation.

Fiction provides entertainment, relaxation, and escapism and Blackpool Libraries undertakes to respond to these needs but will not purchase disproportionate quantities of ephemeral fiction at the expense of the serious novel.

It is impossible to assess every novel at the acquisition stage with reference to controversial issues. It is assumed that the adult reader is capable of making his/ her own critical and reasoned evaluation of views and opinions expressed in a book.

4.3.3 Non-Fiction

Subject content, accuracy and presentation will be the principal criteria for the selection of non-fiction material.

5. STOCK EDITING

Weeding and withdrawal of stock will be done on a regular and systematic basis, following the monthly Stock Management Programme. Criteria involved in this includes: -

- usage
- currency
- physical condition

6. SPECIFICS RELATING TO CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S STOCK

6.1 Controversial Issues

Controversy over children's reading usually arises on such issues as cultural worthiness, sex, propaganda, political or religious bias, violence, race and racism and gender stereotyping. In order to truly help support the education and development of children and young people they must be provided with the means and resources to cope with the real world and to ask questions about it.

A complete ban on bad language in children's books would be difficult, given the fact that it does need to be considered in context, as part of the action.

Descriptive passages containing violence sometimes give cause for concern, however, to remove all books containing violence could result in the banning of most fairy tales, the bible and those books which are intended to show the futility of violence.

By the same token, books containing sexual themes may aid teenagers and young adults to deal with their own sexuality.

Political ideas are explored in literature and can provide an excellent means of provoking thoughts about the way that the world is viewed.

All these issues are further complicated by differing levels of maturity of particular children who may have the same chronological age. Nevertheless, Blackpool Libraries aim to meet the needs of children and young people as developing readers whilst relying on the interest and guidance in selection which parents, carers and guardians can provide their children.

6.2 Selection Criteria and Coverage

Blackpool Libraries aim to build collections for children and young people which: -

- encourage children and young people to read for pleasure
- support the development of literacy and information skills
- are attractive and appropriate to children's/ teenagers interest, needs and abilities
- includes material for parents and adults to share with babies and toddlers
- are organised clearly
- provide experience of realism, fantasy, past and future, folk and fairy tales, myths and legends, poetry and stories representing a whole social world of different values, relationships and ways of life
- contain books which vary in terms of difficulty and challenge, catering for both the experienced and inexperienced reader.
- contain quick reads, long reads, textless books, beautifully produced or unusual books
- present positive images of people from different ethnic, cultural and social groups
- present positive images of people with disabilities
- contain books which provide accurate, up-to-date and relevant information, and resources to help with homework queries
- include materials in formats appropriate for children and young people with special needs

If you have any questions or comments to make regarding this policy please contact : Pat Rodgers (email: pat.rodgers@blackpool.gov.uk) or Anne Ellis (email: anne.ellis@blackpool.gov.uk)