

Learning Resource Centre (LRC) Policy

(in conjunction with the Peninsula Multi Academy Trust)

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Learning Resource Centre (LRC) Policy

The Learning Resource Centre (library) strives to support the whole school vision:

Weatherhead to be one of the best schools in the country, renowned for its academic and teaching excellence and outstanding student support. To have an inclusive community based on mutual respect that instils a world class ambition in all its students, no matter what their background.

With this in mind, the mission of the LRC is to provide a safe and inclusive space, where all students are welcome to explore, discover and learn. It will support the academic and personal growth of all students by providing a wide range of resources, and by fostering a love of reading regardless of ability and background.

1. Supporting the Curriculum

General

The LRC Manager works with Curriculum Coordinators and subject teachers to ensure the LRC houses resources linked to the curriculum. These will include books linked to classroom topics and homework assignments, as well as texts to encourage deeper subject learning for all students. The LRC will also aim to provide suitable books for wider reading within subject areas, using both nonfiction and fiction options, in order to promote independent study and learning.

Teachers and departments are able to borrow book collections from the LRC to use in the classroom, to support one-off lessons or a longer scheme of work. The LRC Manager can also produce reading lists for certain subjects or topics, and share them with staff and students through the library management system (Accessit).

Staff and students can request specific books for purchase in the LRC, or identify subject and/or key stage areas that require further investment/updating.

6th Form

In addition to use of the main LRC space, 6th form students are able to access the mezzanine floor in order to undertake independent study. Computer facilities are available, as well as work desks, and reference books from the LRC can be used in this area.

The LRC houses a range of books suitable for KS5 students, including subject specific text books, curriculum-linked wider reading options (fiction and nonfiction), and 'reading for pleasure' books. The LRC Manager delivers an induction session to all Year 12 students, outlining the resources and spaces available for their use. 6th Form students are able to borrow books from the LRC, and are allowed to borrow a greater number of books than KS3 and KS4. They do not have to provide their planner in order to borrow books, but must show their 6th form lanyard.

Staff and students are able to request books for purchase that will prove useful for 6th form students. This can include subject-related text books and wider reading options, as well as specific books/topics for EPQ research.

6th form Library Leaders use their Enrichment time to undertake various tasks in the LRC. These can include working with Year 7 students to assist with reading, running lunch and after school clubs, and helping with the management of the LRC space and stock.

2. Supporting Whole School Literacy

The LRC supports whole school literacy in a number of ways. Providing free and easy access to a wide range of texts allows students to discover and engage with many different writing styles, authors and topics. By promoting a culture of reading for pleasure, all students are able to view themselves as 'readers', and are then encouraged to read more frequently and more widely. The LRC Manager is available to help with book selection, and can guide groups or individual students to texts they will find enjoyable, useful and/or interesting. Although the books are not sorted by reading ability level, the LRC Manager is able to help students find suitable books for their ability, using access to reading test data when necessary. The LRC Manager can also offer suggestions to help students develop their reading skills, targeting specific issues (e.g. needing dyslexia-friendly text, or struggling with reading comprehension).

In Year 7, students have one reading lesson per week in the LRC, with an induction programme delivered by the LRC Manager. This covers use of the LRC, as well as learning about making positive reading choices, and reducing any barriers that may prevent reading enjoyment. Year 8 students also have reading lessons - usually fortnightly - and both year groups are encouraged to discuss books and reading regularly. Discussions are designed to improve oracy skills, as well as encouraging engagement with reading. The LRC Manager can also use this time to model fluency by reading aloud to the class, and to share information about different books, collections and genres that are available.

Writing is also encouraged in the LRC, with regular themed writing competitions throughout the year. These are often 'in-house', with prizes provided for the winners and runners up. Entries are also promoted and supported for the national 'Young Writers' competitions, where selected students can have their stories/poems published in anthologies.

3. Promoting Reading for Pleasure

A strong focus of the LRC is to promote reading for pleasure for all students, regardless of age, ability, or reading preferences. This is achieved in a number of ways - the available resources, access and use of the LRC space, and extracurricular opportunities.

Available Resources

(See section 4. **Management of the LRC Collection** for more details)

In order to promote reading for pleasure, it is vital that the LRC provides plenty of choice for students, and access to books that cover a wide range of ages and abilities. Students are introduced to the LRC during Year 7 reading lessons, and shown how to navigate the space to find books. Time is spent during Year 7 inductions discussing how to choose books wisely, in order to increase the likelihood of enjoyment. Books can be borrowed by students to take away with them, allowing regular reading, and can be reserved if already on loan to another student.

Students are able to make purchase requests for certain books or types of books, if there are gaps in the collection.

Access and Use of the LRC Space

All Year 7 and Year 8 students access the LRC during their regular reading lessons, where time is dedicated to reading for pleasure. Free choice of texts is allowed during these times (including books from home), with the LRC Manager able to provide assistance.

All year groups are able to access the LRC during break times and lunch times, when the space is available to choose, borrow and renew books, as well as for quiet reading. Students are allowed to read their own books from home, as well as having the choice of all the LRC books and magazines.

After school, the LRC is open for students to choose, borrow and return books, and also as a quiet reading space. It is also a 'safe space' for students needing to wait after school for any reason e.g. completing homework, waiting for a parent, or meeting a friend after a club.

This regular use in Year 7 and 8, and open access for all year groups, can help less confident readers feel more comfortable and 'at home' in the LRC, and more likely to engage with the LRC Manager and the book collection. This helps to create a sense of ownership for the students for the space, and encourages high standards of behaviour and respect shown to the staff and stock.

Extracurricular Opportunities

As well as being open for use at break, lunch and after school times, the LRC also provides a number of extracurricular opportunities which can help to foster a love of books and reading. These include:

- **Student Librarians:** Students from Years 8 upwards can apply to become Student Librarians. This involves a series of training opportunities in order to learn how the LRC runs, and subsequently take charge of certain tasks and duties in the LRC. The Student Librarian scheme is based around the subject leadership programme, including bronze, silver and gold levels of achievement. Student Librarians are also able to volunteer to assist with assemblies and open evenings, and can help to plan and deliver other LRC events.

- **Themed lunchtime events/activities:** Throughout the year the LRC Manager plans various themed activities at lunchtimes, to celebrate new book releases, reading-related national events, or seasonal occasions e.g. Harry Potter Book Day, Halloween, World Book Day. These activities can include quizzes, book readings, voting polls, film screenings etc.
- **Special Events:** Some themed events take place on a bigger scale, and may include after school celebrations with crafts, games, competitions, and special visitors. The LRC Manager also organises an annual 'Author Week' event, where current authors, illustrators and poets are welcomed to Weatherhead to deliver assemblies, lessons and workshops for our students.
- **Reading Clubs:** The LRC Manager, along with 6th form Library Leaders, coordinates a number of lunchtime and after school reading clubs, designed around student interests and demand. These provide a relaxed and welcoming environment to read together and discuss books.
- **Writing and Reading challenges/competitions:** Throughout the year, there are a number of writing competitions (in-house and through 'Young Writers') that students can choose to enter. There are also regular reading challenges, with prizes for individual students and wider groups (e.g. form groups, teaching groups, year groups).

4. Management of the LRC Collection

Collection Development:

The collection will reflect the school curriculum and interests of the students, as well as providing resources for recreational and academic reading, wellbeing and social development that are relevant, accurate, up-to-date and current. Resources will support cultural diversity and a wide range of ideas, opinions and viewpoints. Our whole school community is encouraged to make suggestions for LRC resources they feel would be useful and/or of interest to our student body.

Books will be purchased throughout the school year from a number of retailers to ensure value for money. They will be chosen based on meeting part of the following criteria:

- Books recommended by the school community
- New releases of relevance/interest to our students
- To broaden the range, diversity and representation of books available
- Include more books written by visiting authors
- Provide additions to support changes in the curriculum
- To fill gaps in the existing collection

Our choice of resources will uphold the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and our own Weatherhead equality objectives, aiming to avoid direct and indirect discrimination based on protected characteristics: race, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age. The choice of resources should ensure equality, diversity and inclusion with representation for all, and the opportunity for students to read about cultures, experiences and backgrounds that are different to their own.

The LRC Manager will use their professional judgement and experience when choosing resources, taking into account the needs of the school community to ensure that there is a wide range of material for all ages and abilities. Maintaining this book knowledge requires continual CPD as well as an awareness of resources that are being promoted on social media amongst teens and young people, and what may be deemed controversial. This can change with time, and the LRC Manager will use reputable websites and organisations, as well as the experience/knowledge of other schools' library staff, to aid in the selection of resources.

Collection Maintenance:

The LRC collection will need to be evaluated and 'weeded' regularly to ensure it meets the evolving needs of the school community, as well as societal and cultural changes regarding language and ideas. Students' interests change, authors wane in popularity, and every year there are new books purchased requiring space on the shelves. The criteria for purchasing items will be applied when evaluating existing stock - the books should be accurate (in the case of non-fiction), of interest/use to students, and current. Books in poor condition will also be removed from circulation, and a replacement copy purchased when possible if the book is still of value to the LRC collection.

Book Donations:

Offers of books to be donated to the LRC are always most welcome. However, it is important that any student, parent/carer or staff member speaks to the LRC Manager beforehand. Any books accepted for donation will have to be reviewed against the same criteria as new books being ordered, to ensure the full collection is well managed. With this in mind, books brought in for donation may be returned to the owner if they are not able to be used in the LRC.

Stock Review Requests:

The LRC will not knowingly hold resources that are felt to be discriminatory or inappropriate, but all members or the school community should recognise that material with challenging content or adult themes will not necessarily be censored or excluded.

If any member of the school community feels a currently held book should not be available on the LRC shelves, they can contact the LRC Manager to ask for a review. They will need to have accessed/read the book themselves, and will need to provide reasons for the review request. Whilst individual values and beliefs will always be respected, the LRC has to provide a diverse range of books to cater to all students. A decision will be reached by the school as to whether the book will be fully removed from circulation, moved to the 'Senior' section, restricted for a particular student (if the parent/carer wishes), or allowed to remain in its current state of availability.

Age-Restricted Resources:

The LRC contains books that have been classified and labelled by the LRC Manager as 'Year 10+' (Senior). This is logged on the computer system as 'Senior Fiction/Senior Non-Fiction', and visually displayed with an 'exclamation mark' sticker on the book spine.

Unlike films and streaming shows, books are not released with legal age restrictions, and in the majority of cases come with very little age or content guidance from publishers. Whilst the LRC Manager will endeavour to ensure books with significantly mature content (e.g. extreme violence, explicitly described sexual acts, scenes of abuse) are labelled as 'Senior', it must be understood that the LRC caters to all our students aged 11-18, and that the content of the books will vary accordingly. Students mature at different rates, and may be upset by different content. As part of Year 7 LRC inductions, students are advised that if they choose a book that feels too mature, or has content they find upsetting, they can stop reading at any time and change their book. They are also encouraged to discuss anything they read that worries, confuses or concerns them with their teacher/LRC Manager and their parents/carers.

As the LRC Manager is unable to read/review every book, the use of reputable websites and organisations, as well as the experience/knowledge of other schools' library staff, will aid in the designation of new resources as 'Senior'. If a student or parent/carer feels a book may need reviewing as potentially 'Senior', please make the LRC Manager aware and a review will take place.

If a student below Year 10 wishes to borrow a book that has been designated 'Senior', they would need to obtain permission from their parent/carer. This can be done in writing with a signature in the student's planner, on the day-to-day pages that are signed by parents weekly. The permission can cover either a single book title, a book series, all books by a particular author, or all Senior (Year 10+) books.

An example written permission note would be:

I give permission for [student's name] to borrow all books by Stephen King from the school LRC. [Signature, Relationship to student, Date].

This will then be logged on the library management system.

If a parent/carer wishes to remove this permission at a later date, they should contact the LRC Manager and the library management system will be updated accordingly.

5. Student Book Loans

Borrowing Books:

All Weatherhead High School students are automatically a member of our LRC upon admission to the school. They will be issued with login details to access the library management system as part of their LRC

induction programme in Year 7, or if joining the school at a later date they will have it provided along with other school login details.

In order to borrow resources, students will need their planner and the book will need to be logged by the LRC Manager or a student librarian on the library management system. The book and the student's planner will then be stamped with the due date - this is normally two weeks after the loan date, unless affected by school holidays, INSET days or bank holidays. 6th form students will not need a planner, but will need to show their 6th form lanyard.

Books that have been borrowed from the LRC can go home with students, and students are taught in Year 7 induction lessons how to treat the books so that they are not damaged. It is expected that books are returned in the condition they are borrowed, with allowances for reasonable wear and tear. The student who has borrowed the book is responsible for it for the duration of the loan. If they wish to lend it to a friend, they are both advised to see the LRC Manager in order to transfer the book to the friend's account.

Returning or Renewing Books:

Students can return books at any time before or on the due date, by handing them to the LRC Manager or putting the book in the returns box in the LRC. If a book reaches or is nearing its due date, students can ask to renew the loan. To do this they will need the book and their planner. The library management system will be updated, and new date stamps will be put in the book and planner. Book renewals may not be possible on a repeated basis if another student has reserved the book.

Late, Lost or Damaged Books:

If a book is returned late there are no fines to pay. However, students will start to receive messages via form tutors and the LRC Manager to remind them to bring the books back to return or renew. It is important that students return books on time, so that the school can ensure they are available for other readers. If students have been verbally reminded about overdue books multiple times, letters will be sent home to parents/carers asking for the book(s) to be returned. If the book is still not returned, a letter will be sent home to parents/carers to explain that the book must either be returned immediately, or a replacement fee paid to enable the school to purchase a replacement copy. There is also the alternative of providing a replacement copy in reasonable condition (purchased from any retailer).

If books are lost or damaged beyond repair, students and parents/carers are advised to let the LRC Manager know as soon as possible, and a letter will be sent home to ask for a replacement fee or for a replacement copy of the book to be brought in. Currently the fee is charged at a standard rate of £5.00 per book, but is reviewed annually to take into consideration rising book prices.

If a student receives a message about an overdue book but thinks they have already returned it to the LRC, they are advised to speak to the LRC Manager as soon as possible, so that the library can be checked and the issue resolved.