

<b>POLICY TITLE</b>	<b>Unaccompanied Children Policy</b>
Reference Number:	G:\ Lending Services - Policies
Authorised by: M. Foster Library and Archives Manager	Effective Date: 1 August 2011
<b>Purpose</b> This defines the statement of intent of the policy.	<p>This policy is to provide guidance for staff and patrons when children are unaccompanied in the library.</p> <p>The aim of the library is to provide a safe, welcoming atmosphere that promotes the responsible supervision of children in the library.</p>
<b>Scope</b> This defines who the policy applies to.	<p>This policy applies to all library patrons during everyday library use.</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy, caregivers must be 14 years and older in accordance with the Children, Young Persons &amp; their Families Act 1989.</p> <p>Parents and caregivers are responsible for the supervision of children under the age of 14 as laid out in the Summary Offences Act 1981.</p>
<b>Definitions</b> (of any terms or acronyms)	Unaccompanied children refers for the purposes of this policy to any child whose parent/caregiver is not on library premises.
<b>Principles</b> This section outlines the principles of the management policy.	<p>The safety and wellbeing of children in the library is the guiding principle at all times.</p> <p>Library staff will do their best to ensure the safety of children while they are in the library. Ultimately, however, parents and caregivers are responsible for the supervision of children under the age of 14.</p> <p>Children may not be left in the care or supervision of any child who is under 14 years of age. If this should occur, the child/children will be considered to be unaccompanied and appropriate action taken.</p> <p>The Library recognises it is reasonable to expect older children (more than 10 years) to visit on their own. Each situation involving an unaccompanied child of any age needs to be</p>

	<p>considered on its own merits.</p> <p>Library staff are responsible for acting on their concerns about unaccompanied children in the library, however, they will not assume responsibility for any unaccompanied child.</p> <p>Library staff may request school/ study passes from students they think should be at school and contact the Truancy Officer, CYFS or the Police if appropriate.</p> <p>The Education Act 1989 is used as the basis for determining whether a child should be at school. According to the Act, “every person who is not a foreign student is required to be enrolled at a registered school at all times during the period beginning on the person's 6th birthday and ending on the person's 16th birthday”.</p>
<p><b>Procedure</b> This section states what responsibilities both staff and management have in relation to the application and ownership of the policy.</p>	<p><b><u>Unaccompanied Children</u></b> Library staff who have concerns about the safety of an unaccompanied child will attempt to locate the parent/caregiver of that child.</p> <p>If a parent/caregiver is located they will be advised that they are responsible for the supervision of their child. A copy of the ‘Unaccompanied children guide’ may be given to the parent/caregiver.</p> <p>If unable to locate the parent/caregiver the police may be called.</p> <p><b><u>Use of the library by children during school hours</u></b> If staff believe that an unaccompanied child should be in school, they should approach the child concerned and ask if they have permission to be in the library. Valid reasons for being in the library can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a study pass or equivalent (must be sighted)</li> <li>• an exemption eg: home schooled</li> <li>• currently under the supervision of CYFS and not attending school</li> <li>• have been expelled or suspended (according to the Education Act 1989 Section14, (children who have been suspended or stood down are not necessarily required to attend school and are therefore no longer regarded as truants. They may of course still be regarded as unaccompanied children)</li> </ul> <p>Staff who are not satisfied with the child's reason for being in the library should contact :</p> <p><b>Truancy Officers</b> - Cell: Lindsay Thomas 0274724730 or Neil Jackson 0277557797 Office: 032141013 ext 3 <b>Community Police can be contacted if necessary on 03 211 0400</b></p>
<p>Revision History</p>	
<p>Effective Date</p>	<p>1 August 2011</p>

Review Period	Annual
Associated Documents/References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unaccompanied Children Guide</li> <li>• <a href="#">SUMMARY OFFENCES ACT 1981</a>. Offences Against Persons or Property [10B. Leaving child without reasonable supervision and care---]</li> <li>• <a href="#">Education Act 1989</a> – Suspension (Section 14)</li> <li>• Truancy Officers: 0274724730 or 0277557797</li> <li>• <b>Community Police 03 211 0400</b></li> </ul>